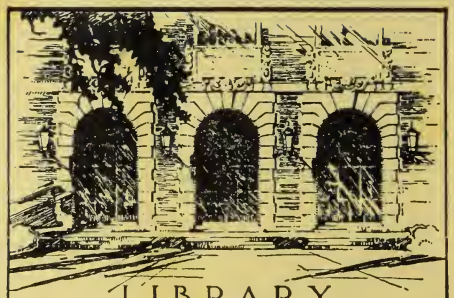

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MRS. BROWN'S VISIT

TO

THE PARIS EXHIBITION.

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MRS. BROWN'S VISIT

TO

THE PARIS EXHIBITION.

BY

ARTHUR SKETCHLEY,

AUTHOR OF "THE BROWN PAPERS."

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THE BROWN PAPERS.

By Arthur Sketchley.

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TO THE READER.

It may be necessary for me to give a short explanation of the circumstances under which I became cognizant of Mrs. Brown's proceedings at the Paris Exhibition, and I will do so in as few words as possible. It was on a remarkably-hot day in the early part of last month that I encountered Mrs. Brown at the Exhibition. She was seated at one of the refreshment stalls partaking of some bottled stout, sausage, bread and butter, which she termed "a 'asty smack," though it certainly occupied a considerable time to get through. It was during that repast that she told me a small portion of her adventures, in which I naturally felt so deep an interest that I availed myself of a kind invitation she gave me to pay her a visit and hear the sequel on her return to

town, as I was unfortunately unable to remain in Paris with her. But though not an eye-witness of all that befel her, I can vouch for the authenticity of all the statements made by this worthy lady, and recommend her as a safe guide for those who may desire to visit the Great Exhibition of 1867.

ARTHUR SKETCHLEY.

LONDON, 1*st June*.

MRS. BROWN'S VISIT TO THE PARIS EXHIBITION.

I DON'T think, Mr. Scratchley, as ever I shall 'old up my 'ead agin, as the sayin' is, for of all the dead beat feelins as ever I had, this is the wust, and do, I assure you, as now I've got onto this chair, I feels as tho' I'd took root in it, for I never did see sich a place as this Paris for knockin' any one up, as well I remembers the last time as I were here, crippled me for months, and certingly I did wow and declare as nothink ever wouldn't make me come 'ere agin; and when Brown come in and said as he was a-goin' to Paris, I says, "Well, then," I says, "leave me at 'ome;" but you see as 'uman natur is weak, and 'ere I am, tho' only arrived the night afore last, and wouldn't 'ave believed it, only Brown, he says as it would be a sin and a shame for to miss such a chance of goin' there for next to nothink!

I says, "Whatever do you mean by next to nothink?"

"Why," says Brown, "there's a party in the name of Cook as makes escursions all over the world."

I says, "Then I'm glad as I ain't 'is good lady; but," I says, "do you mean to say as he makes escursions all over the world, like as they did used to take us to the Rye 'Ouse of a Whit Monday?" And well I remembers poor Mrs. Alder, the butcher's lady, as pitched out of the wan 'ead foremost thro' a-stretchin' out too far for to look at the wiew, and if she 'adn't stuck between the two sharfts and the 'osses tails, must 'ave been trampled to death in a instant, as shows as it's a mercy sometimes for to be a lusty figger, the same as Mrs. Beales, as trod on one of them round irons in the pavement as they lets the coals down thro', and if she'd been a inch less round the waist wouldn't never 'ave 'ung there a-danglin', till drawed up, thro' passin' of a clothes line, under 'er arm 'oles, as cut 'er dreadful, but better any 'ow than a wiolent death.

Brown, he says, "When you've quite done a-clackin', p'raps you'll listen to reason, as ain't a thing for to be looked for in a woman."

I says, "Mr. Brown, you're mighty clever, no doubt; but if you're a-goin' to insult my sect, I don't want to hear no more about it."

He says, "Oh, pray, don't 'ear if you don't like; but," he says, "as several friends of yourn is a-goin', I thought p'raps as you'd like the trip, and all done with no trouble nor espence."

I says "Whoever is a-goin'?"

"Well," he says, "there's Mr. and Mrs. Paine, and Miss Tredwell, and Mr. and Mrs. Archbutt, and the Wellses."

I says, "I ain't no objection to the Archbutts, nor yet to Mrs. Wells, but as to 'er 'usband, he's a reg'lar hidjit, and that Miss Tredwell is a hass."

He says, "I never did 'ear such a woman to find fault as you are, Martha. Why, you'd find out blemishes in a hangel."

I says, "That ain't Miss Tredwell, tho' you are always a-cryin' 'er up, for she's no hangel."

Tho' the moment as I 'eard she were a-goin', I says, "I'm there," for I wasn't a-goin' to let 'er 'ave a chance of pisonin' Brown's mind agin me, as I know'd as she'd glory in, for tho' not a jealous disposition, and, goodness knows, no cause; yet it's more than flesh and blood can stand, to think as your own 'usband's been set agin you, with nobody nigh for to take your part.

So I says, "Well then, Brown, let's 'ear about it."

"Well," he says, "it's Cook's escursion, as I were a-sayin'."

"Ah," I says, "let's 'ope there ain't too many cooks, as we all knows will spile the broth;" as I'm sure, Mr. Scratchley, is true with these 'ere French, as is all cooks; and I never tasted sich rubbish as their broth, as they calls bullion, as don't taste of nothink but of water and grease, as they'll lap up by the quart, as can't do 'em no good.

Brown, he was a-losin' 'is temper, and says to me, "Are you a-goin' to listen or not?"

I says, "You needn't be down my throat, jest cos I opens my mouth."

He says, "Take and read it yourself."

"No," I says, "you esplain it clear to me."

"Well, then," he says, "you can go and see this 'ere Exhibition in Paris, and stop a week, for about five pounds, as is cheap."

"Yes," I says, "but none of their dirty 'oles to live in, and all manner of beastliness for to eat, as the werry sight on gives me the 'orrors."

He says, "I've heard say as everythink is fust-rate, and as Mr. Cook looks arter it all 'isself, as is a 'ighly respectable party."

"Well," I says, "I should 'ope so, or else you won't ketch me a-filanderin' about Paris with him, as is a bold place; and you do ought for to be werry careful 'ow you goes on, for them foreigners is a lot as makes uncommon free."

"Well," says Brown, "I don't think as you'll

ketch any one a-makin' too free with you in a 'urry."

"Ah," I says, "Brown, there was a time when you wouldn't 'ave spoke that light about it."

"Yes," he says, "that were afore you took to a front," and bursts out a-larfin', as 'urt my feelins', though I wouldn't let 'im see it.

"Well," he says, "are you agreeable for to go?"

I says, "I am, Brown, thro' 'avin' wowed for to obey you."

"Oh," he says, "don't mind that; stop at 'ome if you likes."

I says, "No, Mr. Brown, I goes where you goes, and stops where you stops."

"Well, then," he says, "be ready by Saturday."

And so I was, tho' not a day as I likes to leave 'ome.

Somehow I didn't feel as I were a-goin' on Saturday, and so it turned out, for on Friday evenin' Brown said as we wasn't to start till the Tuesday follerin'.

I was werry glad to 'ave the time for to get ready, and certingly I must say as Mrs. Porter, as is the laundress, 'ad got me up two muslings beautiful, as was lovely dresses—one a orange striped with green, and the other a blue, with large yall er leaf a-runnin' all over it.

I wouldn't 'ave no scarcity of clothes, so took my large 'air-trunk, as is a useful size, and did once 'ave brass nails all round, as was nearly all picked out by a cockatoo with a yaller top-knot, as was brought from sea by a captain as once lodged with me, and was kep' on a perch with a chain to 'is leg, jest long enough to reach that box, only one night, and not a nail in the top on it as he hadn't picked out afore mornin'.

I couldn't find the key of that box nowheres, so sent to the locksmith as fitted one in. I don't think as ever I did feel a 'otter morning than that Tuesday as we started; and of all the tempers as ever a man did show, it was Brown, as I says, "Really it's quite awful for anyone as is goin' to sea for to use sich langwidge over a boot-lace, as is enough to bring down a judgment on you;" the same as that boy as went to sea thro' a-sayin' don't care, and was tore to bits by lions, as I know it's true is found there, thro' a seein' one myself at the Jewlogical Gardens, as was that tame and fondled the sailor as 'ad ketched 'im for all the world like a lap-dog. Not as I should 'ave cared for 'is nasty slimy ways.

I do think as them cabmen was born for torments, for if that there idjot as come to take us to the railway didn't take and drop my box slap onto my bandbox, as it's lucky I tied up in a old shawl, or it wouldn't

never 'ave 'ung together, and my leghorn bonnet a pancake when I took it out.

My last words to Mrs. Challin, as 'ad come to take care of the 'ouse, was, "Mind as you waters the plants in the back parlor winder, and feeds my bird, not a-forgettin' of the cat," as I'm sure knowed as I was a-goin', for he'd been and 'id 'isself jest like a Christshun, as many can't a-bear sayin' good-bye, as I'm one myself. The 'oss went off with sich a jerk as nearly throwed me 'ead first thro' the winder, and Brown, that savage, a-sayin', "Whatever are you a-buttin' at?"

I says, "I ain't a-buttin' at nothink, but," I says, "I do feel that faint as I must have a somethink," for I was all of a tremble, as if somethink was a-goin' to 'appen, and arter I'd took a drain I felt better; but them railways always upsets me with their screamins, as there can't be no sense in.

I was well wrapped up, for Mrs. Challin, she says to me, "Depend on it as you'll feel the sea that chilly as might give you a cold as would lay you up," as I know'd it certingly might, for I remembers a cold as I took, when a gal, thro' a-bathin at Margate, as is the reason as I've never took a bath since. So I wore my coburg cloth and a netted spencer under it, with my welwet cape and a warm shawl. I'd got on a pair of them webbin'

shoes and lamb's-wool stockin's, for tho' the weather was that sultry, I wasn't a-goin' to leave off nothink, a-rememberin' well the old sayin', "afore May is out, ne'er cast a clout," tho' I'd took my muslings for to look dressy over there, for I know'd as Paris were a dressy place, and I'm sure the way as you gets stared at, nobody wouldn't credit. I was glad when I was safe in the carriage, and werry nice company, I must say, partickler a lady and gentleman as was a-settin' opposite me, as 'ad got my face to the 'osses. They was elderly both, but seemed for to enjoy life, and the old gentleman, he says, "Ah, mum, we couldn't 'ave done this when we was young, as steam wasn't born nor thought on."

I says, "Sir, you'll escuse me that it were, for I well remembers I was only a gal when a party as lived somewhere out Brompton way, as 'ad a steam cooking-machine, and blow'd 'is own 'ead off thro' a-tamperin' with the taps a-showin' of it to parties as 'ad come to dinner, which in course under them circumstances he never tasted, poor feller. I was quite young that time as they opened that railway and killed the Duke of Wellin'ton, werry nigh, as was only saved thro' some one else a-throwin' 'isself under the wheels for to save 'im."

The old gentleman says, "Excuse me, mum, but you've got 'old of the wrong story."

I says, "Well," I says, "that's what my own mother told me, as was one as would 'ave scorned a false'ood; and certingly I remember myself once being aboard a steamer a-goin' to Margate with a aunt of mine, as the biler on bust and 'ad to be took over the side aboard of another, and thought as we'd lost every rag of clothes as turned up when least expected on the Margate jetty, tho'," I says, "I'm not a-goin' to deny as steam is a wonderful inwention, for all that."

"Yes," says the old gent, "and found out all by accident."

I says, "Yes, and dreadful accidents, too; for I'm sure it's enough to make you trimble all over to take up the paper, and," I says, "I'm sure to read about the way as the train run right over a bridge the other day."

"Oh," says the old lady, "pray don't, mum, for I'm that nervous, as any illusions to accidents, and I must get out at the fust station."

"Ah," I says, "some is so; but, law, it's no use a-thinkin' about it, for my part, whenever I goes out anywheres I gives myself up for lost, and then don't think no more about it, tho'," I says, "for to end piecemeal ain't what any one would like."

Brown, he says, "Drop it, can't you, don't you see as you're a-makin' this good lady quite faint, so drop it."

I did; and talkin' of droppin', I thought as I must 'ave been melted down with the 'eat, tho' a-facin' of the wind as blowed things into my face constant, and a somethink got in my eye, as was hagony till the old gentleman got it out with 'is gold ring, as I've 'eard say is a fine thing for the eye, partikler for to cure a sty.

'Owever Mr. Cook could manage to 'ave the sea that calm as it were a lookin'-glass, I could never make out, till a young gent as were a-settin' by me says, "Why not?"

I says, "Because we all know as them elephants is outrageous when let loose, as I knows well, for when I come afore I thought as every moment was my last, and looked for'ard quite nat'ral to a briny grave."

Says the young chap, "Would you try 'omy-pathy?"

"Well," I says, "I'd owe any one a good deal as would save me from them suffrages."

"Oh," he says, "one of these powders will keep it off."

"Well," I says, "I wish as you'd 'ave kep' it off me;" for he was a-goin' to take a powder, and if the wind didn't take and blow it all into my face, and a lot went into my eye, as was quite throw'd away, thro' not bein' a part as sea-sickness is a trouble to.

I don't think as I should 'ave 'ad a qualm, only some nasty blacks was a-settin' near me as give way to their feelin's disgustin'.

So I says, "You dirty black beast," I says, "'ow dare you to do it!"

He says, "Me no go for to do it. No me fault."

I says, "Yes, it is." I says, "Why can't you turn your nasty black face away from anybody?" As is always a unpleasant sight, for if there is a thing in this world as I 'ates it's a black man; not but what of course they've got their feelin's, only they always gives me a turn some'ow, not but what I've know'd 'em that affable as you'd quite take to 'em, and as to cookin', they're wonderful clever, tho' I don't never quite fancy the wittles.

I've 'eard a deal about their ways over there in "Robinson Crusoe," tho' certainly that Friday were a kind-'arted savage, as seemed fond of his Pa, as is 'uman natur still tho' black.

I felt a little bit squeamy once, but only for 'arf a minit like, and wouldn't touch nothink but a glass of bitter ale; and all as I've got to say is, that if ever any one did rule the waves it's Mr. Cook's escursions.

When we got to Dieppe, Brown says to me, "Old gal, it won't never do for us to get to Paris in the

middle of the night or towards mornin', so I tell you what it is, we'll go on to Ruin."

"Well," I says, "I don't 'old with goin' to Ruin, as we could 'ave gone to long ago at once but for care and a-lookin' to the main chance, but if you're a-goin there I'll foller."

He says, "It's a fine old town, and we can sleep there, and get on to Paris to-morrer."

I says, "I'm agreeable."

I ain't got nothink to say agin Ruin, as certingly is a fine town, but I'm sure the fall as I got a-gettin' into bed with them spring mattresses, as is wobbly sort of things, and thro' me not bein' over active in climbin', was a buster. I got into the bed and slipt off agin in a instant, and don't think as ever I should 'ave got up agin if Brown 'adn't come in to 'elp me, and no bones broke, only a good deal shook.

It certingly is wonderful for to see them old churches, that crumbly as you wouldn't think as they could 'ang together for a minit and called Ruin accordin', and werry fine ruins they certingly is; yet I was werry glad for to get on to Paris thro' my things bein' sent thro', and 'adn't a change of nothin' for to sleep in, as ain't pleasant in a foreign land. It's werry well for Brown, as got shaved in the mornin'; but, law, I didn't feel myself like myself.

Of all the rain as ever I did see, it come down all the way to Paris, as is thro' green fields; and you wouldn't think foreign parts not to look at 'em; and when we got to Paris, you never did the crowds a-fightin' for to get a cab was wonderful to see.

Talk of French politeness, I'm sure that's rubbish, for the way as they pushed and shoved about was downright English; and as to them porters, they didn't mind nothink as I said.

They was certingly werry perlite over my luggage, and well they might be, for I 'adn't nothin' smuggled; and they asked me if I'd anything for to declare.

"Yes," I says, "I can declare as they're my lawful property."

Says the interpreter, "They don't mean that."

I says, "What do they mean?"

"Why," he says, "anything for duty."

I says, "In course not, and shouldn't say so if I 'ad; let 'em find it."

I do think we was over a 'our a-waitin' for that cab, and got one at last; and 'adn't to go werry far to where we was a-goin' to stop, as is a 'ome as Mr. Cook 'ad prowided, and a mercy too, for of all the charges I never did, as Mrs. Archbutt met a friend as told her they was chargin' 'arf a crown for a cup of tea as wasn't drinkable, tho' it did

ought to be, for the price is somethink frightful; and I'm sure would be worth anyone's while for to bring over a pound or two, as nobody needn't pay more than four shillin's now-a-days, as is a 'igh price, and not to be 'ad decent for three times the money in Paris.

I was glad for to get a cup of tea any'ow when I got to where we was a-goin', and fell in with the others as 'ad come on, and dead beat they was, as is only nat'ral; and there was that Miss Tredwell a-howlin' with the tooth-ache, and Mrs. Paine, she'd been and lost all 'er things, as made Paine go on any 'ow than was becomin' of a Christshun.

As to Mrs. Wells, she's one of them poor 'aporths of cheese as is always a-goin' to faint, and did ought to 'ave stopped at 'ome; and as to Wells, he ain't no more feelin' than a cobbler's lap-stone, as the sayin' is; and 'er always a-cryin' as he didn't love her, and quite bothered me aboard the steamer, a-sayin' as he did used once to doat on the ground as she walked on afore she lost 'er eye, as certingly is a blemish, but not one to set a man agin 'is lawful wife; for I do believe as Brown would love me all the same, p'raps more, if my 'ead was to be knocked off to-morrer, as is one of them back-bone characters as never changes till you dies, as is what I call a true-'arted man, tho' a rough temper, and will speak 'is mind; and

werry nigh give a man a 'ot-un at the railway as was a-shovin' of 'im about too free, as it's a duty not for to let them French trample you under foot, as they'd glory in, no doubt, but will have their work cut out to do it; leastways, that's what I thinks.

I don't think as ever I did feel more fresher than when I started for to see that Exhibition, and 'ad words with Miss Tredwell a-correctin' of me, and sayin', as it were a Exposishun. "Well," I says, "I shouldn't think of settin' you right in a 'buss full of people as knows my way about, p'raps, as well as you, though I never was at boardin' school in France," as she kep' on a-blowin' about, and a-sayin' as 'er accens was quite Parishion, and yet, whenever she did open 'er mouth, there wasn't a soul as understood 'er, and that obstinate as would 'ave she were right, tho' aperient to every one as she were wrong all over, and made 'erself that ridiculous with the 'buss man over the fare as takes your money as soon as ever you gets in, but she says, "Nong payez oncor Jammy," but 'ad pretty soon to, or out he'd 'ave 'ad her as 'ad a glary eye, and didn't seem for to care about the English, as, no doubt, many French can't a-bear 'em as 'ad, p'raps, their own relations prisoners, same as them as made them little straw boxes and things as my dear mother 'ad one on 'er own self as they made,

poor things, and no wonder, as must 'ave 'ad the time 'ang 'eavy on their 'ands, 'cos, when a young woman, my dear mother lived lady's maid with a officer's lady as 'ad the charge on 'em, and told me as 'er 'art bled for 'em, and so did her missuses, partikler for one grey-headed old party as were a Count, or something, and was always a-frettin' and a-takin' on, and that kind lady did used to speak to 'im gentle like, and 'is poor old French eyes would fill up with tears, but, bless you, that proud as they dursn't offer 'im not a pinch of snuff as a favor, but at last let out as he'd got a daughter as was a-dyin', as he'd give 'is life for to see once more; and he did, too, for that officer's lady she never rested till she got him changed for somebody else, and I've 'eard mother say as 'is daughter got quite well, and growed a lusty figger, and come over to England with 'er pa in long gold ear-rings, and 'er 'air done in bows, with bishop's sleeves, as was all the go in them days. So I always feels for them French, for who knows as they mayn't some on 'em be prisoners now, same as they did used to be, shet up till the mob bust in, burnt the Pastiles, and found one as was foolish in 'is 'ead, as, no doubt, too much on 'em would make any one, as is faint smellin' things, and I don't 'old with 'em, not even for a sick room, as a little fresh hair wont never do no.'arm in.

I'm sure, talk of the tower of Babylond, it couldn't 'ave been nothink to that Exhibition, as is a reg'lar confusion of everythink, and all worked by steam-ingins, as is a-goin' like mad all around you, for all the world like the sausage-machine as I well remembers near Shoreditch Church, as caught the man as made 'em by the apron, and if he hadn't 'ad the presence of mind for to undo the little brass 'art as fastened it behind, he'd 'ave been sausage-meat in a minit, and no one never the wiser, as in course they wouldn't, for a clean apron wouldn't give no taste, leastways not as could be unwholesome.

I must say as it's downright wonderful 'owever they could 'ave got the things together, and all a-workin' away, as I see them myself a-makin' soap with the naked eye; not as I'm one to stand a-starin' without a-encouragin' the preformance, as I considers mean; and I'm sure a cake of soap is a thing as always comes in useful, partikler in France, where they ain't much give to usin' on it; for it's a thing as you never do see in a bed-room, and for that matter the washin' things don't seem made for use; not but what I've seen 'em quite as useless in England, and will say as them French beds is beautiful clean down to the mattress, as I'm sure there's many a one in England as the tickin' on won't bear the daylight, and ain't never changed from year's end to year's end; and as to washin'

the blankets, why, there was old Mrs. Namby as lived next door to me at Stepney, she quite blew me up for 'avin' my blankets washed, as she said wore 'em out afore their time.

It's downright wonderful for to see all them savage foreigners a-goin' about that tame, as no doubt they're afraid for to come any of their wagaries, as they'res lots of sojers about as would make dog's-meat on 'em in no time, and serve 'em right if they was to try it on, with their 'eathen ways; as they let's 'em ride about on the top of their camels, just to keep 'em quiet, as was all werry well for them, but I wouldn't 'ave clomb up on one of them 'ump-backed brutes was it ever so, but quite good enough for them as rode 'em.

I was that stunned with the row as them steam-ingins kep' up, that I says to Mrs. Arch-butt, "My 'eads that whirl, as take somethink I must."

So she says, "I'm a-famishin'." And, jest then, up come Mr. Wells, and says as he'd 'ad a glass of pale ale, as 'ad done 'im that good, and made a man on 'im.

So I says, "Wherever did you get it?"

He says, "Jest out at that door."

I says, "We're sure to find you somewheres about"

He says, "All right." And off we goes for to

get a little beer, and come right on to a English refreshment-place, where there was a lot of lovely gals certingly, but looked that 'aughty as you'd 'ave thought they was royal families.

I 'ad a bottle of stout, as they was werry perlite tho', sayin' as the waiter would serve me, and seemed for to look on me as a mother like, no doubt a-feelin' lonesome in that desultory sitivation, and with all them bold foreigners a-starin' at 'em, as certingly ain't got nothin' like 'em in the way of fieldmales not all over the place; tho' I must say as them Frenchwomen 'as a way with them as is uncommon takin', and dresses well even in their shops, as it must take 'arf the mornin' for to do their 'air.

I don't think as ever I did enjoy anythink more than that porter, and me and Mrs. Archbutt was a-settin' 'avin' of our joke over some of them parties, and I says to Mrs. Archbutt, I says, "She was in the way when noses was paid out," illudin' to a party with, I do think, the longest nose as ever I did see a-protrudin' from a 'uman countingouse; "and," I says, "'ow ridiculous young she is dressed, as 'll never see fifty no more. And," I says, "do look at the old guy as is with 'er, with 'is false teeth, and 'air and whiskers dyed."

I was a-runnin' on, and Mrs. Archbutt says to me, "What a one you are to go on!"

I says, "I can't a-bear to see old fools, for they're the worst of fools."

If that old woman with the nose didn't turn on me and say, in English, as "I were a disgrace to my country, a-settin' there abusin' people."

I thought I should 'ave died, for if she wasn't English, and 'im too.

It's lucky as I'd paid for the porter, for I jumps up and 'urries off a-leavin' Mrs. Archbutt for to foller; and if that spiteful old feller with the dyed 'air didn't tell a waiter as I'd bolted without payin', as come arter me, and would 'ave ended unpleasant, only the other waiter as I 'ad paid spoke up like a man.

So I give it that old carecrow well, and says to 'im, "I've a good mind to spile your beauty for you, and knock some of them false teeth down your story-tellin' throat."

Poor Mrs. Archbutt, she says, "Oh, pray don't, Mrs. Brown."

I says, "I ain't a-goin' to be trampled on, mum, not if I knows it." But I pretty near was, for if them niggers on the camels didn't come by, and if it 'adn't been as one of them chaps in cocked 'ats pulled me sharp out of the way, I do believe as I should 'ave been pulverized like the dust under their feet.

When I come to myself, I looks round for Mrs. Archbutt, and if she wasn't disappeared, as I

thought werry unfeelin' for to leave me like that; but I says, "No doubt they ain't none on 'em far off." So I walks all round thro' them refreshment-places a-lookin' for Brown, but not a westment on 'im wasn't wisible nowheres.

So I stops one of them police, and says to 'im, "Brown—passy ici," as I know'd was French for "pass here." He stares at me, and then jabbers somethink about "passy," and I say, "Yes, passy, Brown." So he calls one of them interpreter chaps, as come up and says, "You vant Pascy ?"

I says, "No, I can passy myself, but 'ave you see anythink of my good gentleman in the name of Brown, as is a fine-figgered man, in a dark surtoo, with drab pants, and a bend in 'is back like a magistrate, as many 'as often said to me, "Mrs. Brown, mum, to foller your good gentleman, any one would take 'im for a royal family behind, as is a noble forehead with a commandin' nose, and any one could tell in a instant among a thousand, with a eye like a 'awk a-beamin' on you." So I says, "'ave you see 'im anywheres about ?" If that idjot didn't say as he couldn't comprehend !

"Well," I says, "you must be a born natural, not to understand, and call yourself a interpreter, as understands everythink, leastways did ought to; and," I says, "I won't come out agin without 'is photygrapht, as any one would tell 'im by, tho' only

a shillin', yet a faithful likeness, leastways enough for to show what he might be."

I was a-wanderin' about like any one deserted, and wonderin' 'owever I should get 'ome agin with all that wilderness of people, when all of a sudden I see Brown 'isself a-walkin' that leisurely as if nothink 'ad 'appened. I did feel that aggrawated, and I says to 'im, "Your a nice man, to call yourself a 'usband."

He says, "What's the row?"

"Why," I says, "'ere you've been and lost me for 'ours, and as cool as tho' I'd never lost sight on you."

"Oh," he says, "I know'd you'd turn up. Like a bad shillin', sure to come back." I don't think as ever I did see such a conquest of people, and 'busses, and cabs, and coaches, all a-strugglin' for to get away, and it's wonder as they wasn't all smashed up together.

I says, "Brown, 'owever are we to get 'ome?"

"Oh," he says, "all right, there's a cab been telegraphed for, as Mrs. Wells and Mrs. Archbutt is in, down here."

I says, "Telegraphed for, 'ow is that done?"

"Oh," he says, "quite easy, jest the same as callin' for it."

I says, "I wish as they'd telegraph us 'ome," for my feet was that hagony as I could 'ardly bear to put 'em to the ground.

"Oh," he says, "it ain't far; come on, and put your best leg foremost."

I says, "Brown, 'owever can you be a-talkin' about my legs like that, afore strangers too," not as there was any there as cared about showin' their legs.

I was a-tryin' for to get along as well as I could, when we got up to where the cab was a-comin' along with Mrs. Archbutt and Mrs. Wells in it, as is both full figgers, and there was Miss Tredwell in, too; as filled it chuck full, as the sayin' is.

So as soon as Miss Tredwell see me, she says as she'd get out and walk, as she should prefer, as is 'er bold ways a-likin' to be always a-charfin' and talkin'. I was that dead beat as I couldn't say 'er nay, for walk I couldn't, and three was as much as ever that cab could 'old, and squeezy work it was; but we managed it, and off we goes, and 'adn't got 'arf a mile when, in turnin' the corner pretty sharp, I 'eard a crunch, and then came a bump, and over we was. There was Mrs. Wells a-yellin' and Mrs. Archbutt a-ravin', and there come a crowd, and them police, as got the door open and begun a-pullin' at me like mad, a-tearin' my clothes off my back and a-goin' on like anythink in their langwidge. 'Ow they did get us out I don't know, and a deluge of rain a-comin' down in torrents as drenched us pretty nigh.

I says to Mrs. Archbutt, "Do come on into this caffee," as it's lucky as I know'd the French for brandy; and the little as we took brought us round, tho' Mrs. Wells kep' a-sayin' as it would be 'er death, as bein' out in the wet was always fatal to 'er. I says, "You ain't neither sugar nor salt, as a drop of rain should melt you;" and it's well as she wasn't, for we 'ad to walk thro' it, and a pretty row we 'ad with that cabman, as 'ad been paid, and I suppose wanted to be paid for 'is wheel as he did ought to 'ave 'ad put on stronger. I give the card as 'ad my address on to the police, and then they let us go; and a nice bother we 'ad to get to where we was stoppin', and that sopped as I went to bed the instant as I got in, fully expectin' as I'd got my death of cold; and asked the young woman as was English to bring me a cup of tea for to take the chill out of me.

It was a werry nice room, and all my things was in it as 'ad been moved out of the room as we slep' in the night afore; and glad I was to be in bed and a-thinkin' as Brown wouldn't be long. I 'ad dozed off when I 'eard a 'ammerin' at the door as waked me up, and I says "'Ow foolish on me, I've been and brought the key inside with me as they can't open the door without;" and thinkin' it was Brown, I gets out of bed and goes to open the door jest as I were, and says, "Come in," and if there didn't

stand there two young English jackanapeses, as bust out a-larfin' as soon as ever they see me.

I was a-goin' to slam the door, but they was too quick for me, and one on 'em puts his foot in it and says, "Come, none of that, you've kep' us waitin' long enough."

I says, "Go away you wagabones, or I'll call for 'elp."

They says, "Go away yourself as 'as got our bed-room."

I says, "Never! the chambermaid put me 'ere, 'ere I stops;" and I says, "you'd better be off, or I'll raise the 'ouse, and my 'usband 'll soon settle your 'ash."

They says, "Oh, come, none of that, this is our room, and you come out on it, and that's all about it;" and if they wasn't a-comin' in.

I 'ollers out 'elp, murder, fire, and all manner, and there was a pretty filli loo, as the sayin' is, for out come lots of people in their dishabillies, and up comes Brown and Mr. Wells, as 'ad been settin' up smokin'; and if that stupid gal 'adn't been and put me into the wrong room, as I 'ad to turn out on thro' bein' a double-bedded one, and I says, "Brown, I'm sure, if things goes on like this, I'm not a-goin' to stand it, and 'ome I goes."

"Oh," he says, "go to sleep; you'll be all right in the mornin'." But it was ever so long

afore I did drop off agin, for I wouldn't 'ave 'ad any one see me the figger as I was 'ad it been ever so, and I see that Miss Tredwell all of a broad grin a-starin' at my night cap, and wouldn't never 'ave come out of 'er room only she'd got all 'er back 'air down as she's proud on, tho' all false.

As to Mr. Wells, he come out and behaved like a downright savage in his night-shirt, a-swearin' frightful as I'd been and scared 'is wife to death.

I says, "Oh, rubbish, fiddle-sticks, your wife's a mask of affectation."

"Well," he says, "I don't care about her, but ain't a-goin' to 'ave my rest broke like this, and shall get other quarters."

I says, "Get 'em, and good riddience of bad rubbish," and goes in and slams my door, and Brown in course sided agin me, and said it was my stupidness; and, bless you, I couldn't get to sleep for ever so long thro' the noise in the streets, as is never endin'.

The next mornin' as soon as breakfast were over, Wells says, "We're off—good-day," quite short, as I only says, "'Opes you may better yourself," and didn't say no more thro' a-goin' to dress for the Exhibition, as I put on my musling with the flounces for to be cool, and off we set in a party, agreein' for to be independent and meet among the picters about one o'clock, as is my delight, and could look at by the hour together.

I don't think as ever I did see sich a lot of lovely picters as you keeps a-walkin' round and round thro' all day, leastways me and Mrs. Archbutt did one day, for 'er and me agreed for to keep together, and as to goin' thro' all them gardens along with Brown, that I couldn't, was it ever so. Me and Mrs. Archbutt was a-settin' a-talkin', and if there wasn't a lot of them French a-makin' remarks on us, and a-grinnin', as I says a set of grinnin' baboons, that's what I calls them; tho' certingly Mrs. Archbutt is one of them parties as looks conspicuous, as the sayin' is, for she's as broad as she's long, and a face that red as flambeaus is a fool to it, and will dress that showy, a-sayin' as blue becomes 'er and made 'er look young, as is 'er fancy, poor thing, as nobody with a 'art wouldn't contradict 'er in, as is a 'armless delusion as ever I know'd.

So them French kep' a-makin' remarks, and at last Mrs. Archbutt says to me, "I should like for to tell 'em my mind, the low willins; 'ow dare they, and whatever," says she, "can they see for to larf at in you, mum."

I says, "I were not awear as they were a-larfin' at me, as I thought it was you as they was a-turnin' into ridicule as made me feel 'urt."

She says, "They're starin' at you."

I says, "I don't know as I'm one as ever anyone 'ad the impidence for to stare at, as I'm sure

I never gives no encouragement to parties like that, tho' when a gal couldn't never 'elp parties starin,' thro' me a-bein' that attractive, as I always were much admired;" for, when I was quite a child, I remembers well bein' dressed for a party as I were a-goin' to in a white frock and a green spencer, with a bow behind, and three tucks with work between 'em; a pink sash, and red morocco shoes, with a red coral necklace, and pink glaize musling gloves; with a straw 'at and cherry-coloured ribbins, and was that admired as parties as come for to put out the kitchen chimbly, as 'ad took fire accidental, couldn't do nothink for starin' at me, and let it blaze out, as brought the ingins, and cost my own uncle five pounds, as were a retired calender, and lived comfortable in 'is own 'ouse near Pentonville, tho' a citizen and a liveryman, with a family wault in St. Magnus church, close agin London Bridge, where he lays buried to this werry day, tho' there was a talk of bein' obliged to move 'im for to build New London Bridge.

I see Mrs. Archbutt a-turnin' up 'er nose, and begun a-tellin' me about a nobleman as 'ad kissed is 'and at 'er out of 'is cabrioly in High Park, as is more likely as he were a-takin' a sight at 'er for a reg'lar old fright.

I must say, as the wittles and drink at that Exhibishun is beautiful, though not over whole-

some I shouldn't say, thro' them mixtures as they takes; and as I were a-gettin' peckish, as the sayin' is, I says to Mrs. Archbutt, "Let's go and 'ave a somethink, if it's only a mouthful."

She says, "We'll go to the English refreshments, for then I knows what I'm eatin'."

"Well," I says, "it's pretty much the same everywheres; but," I says, "I've got a fancy for something French."

"But," she says, "if we leaves the picters, we shall miss the others as promised to come and meet us."

"Oh," I says, "we've waited long enough for them; come along, we're sure to meet 'em somewheres."

So off we set; but, law, I got that bothered as I couldn't find my way out, but kep' a-walkin' round and round till I werry near dropped, and then I asks a party as put me in the way to get out; and as soon as ever I come to one of them refreshments, I reg'lar dropped into a seat.

Well, one of them French gassons come up a-askin' me what I'd 'ave, as didn't know what to ask for; so was obligated for to take a sweet cake, and 'ave a glass of their beer, as is the beastliest stuff as ever I did taste, and along with the sweet made Mrs. Archbutt 'eave frightful, a-sayin' as I'd been a-playin' a trick on 'er. I only took one

mouthful myself, and that was a buster, I can tell you, for anyone to bear. What the feller charged I couldn't make out, but set there and took it out in rest, as was needful, for my feet was a-throbbin' fit to bust, tho' I 'ad got myself a pair of them white boots as is that easy, but don't show the foot off, I must say.

"Now," I says, "Mrs. Archbutt, we said as we'd be 'ome early thro' a-thinkin' for to go and see the 'Ipperdrome this evenin'; and," I says, "we'll start," and so we did, for I don't think as anyone can stand more than a hour or so in that Exhibishun.

So we walks out of the gate, and I says to one of them cock 'at perlice, "Omblibus, Parry," and thought as I should know the place by sight as I wanted for to get down at. I thought as that omblibus wasn't a-goin' the right way; no more it wasn't, for if they didn't take us out to Passy, as they calls it. So I gets out and says to the conductor, "Whatever is to become on two lone fieldmales, in a foreign land; we must go back." But he only jabbered something, and pulled that there bell as he'd kep' a-ringin' every minit all the way in my ear, and pretty nigh drove me mad, and away goes the 'buss.

I says, "Whatever are we to do?" for I didn't know my way no more than a uninhabited island, and was afraid for to walk on, a-thinkin' we might be a-goin' wrong; and what with the dust and the

showers as kep' a-comin' up, we was nice figgers; when who should come by in a one-'orse shay but the Wellses, as we said as we wouldn't 'ave nothink to do with, through their a-goin' off like that, as pulled up, and said as they was a-livin' out Passy way, and said as we'd better come and 'ave some refreshments, as, indeed, we wanted bad enough; and Wells he made hisself werry agreeable, and said as he felt sorry as he'd spoke sharp about bein disturbed, as was 'is temper; and as to goin' to Passy, they'd agreed for to do that afore thro' 'avin' friends there as was a-stoppin' out in pension, and found it more quieter and cooler than Paris.

I never was more glad of anythink than the tea and cold meat as we got at that pension; as Mrs. Wells says to me, "Why ever don't you come 'ere and stop?"

"Well," I says, "I don't think as Brown would fancy bein' a pensioner, as is a proud temper, tho' you wouldn't think it for to look at 'im. But," I says, "'owever are we to get 'ome?" But, law, the people of the house was that obligin', as they saw us to a 'buss as took us close where we was a-stoppin', as is out beyond the Shopy Dantin, where the 'busses runs to, and no doubt should 'ave got 'ome all right, and in good time, only Mrs. Archbutt she says to me, "They'll all be gone to the 'Ipperdrome, as they calls the surk, so let's get out, and dawdle along a bit."

I was that tired as I didn't care about it, but didn't like for to seem ill-natured; so out we gets jest agin the Magalin, as they calls the church, as isn't a bit like the chapel over agin the Blackfriars Road, where parties did used to go for to 'ear the singin' of a Sunday.

Well, out we gets, and walks along the Boulywards, and Mrs. Archbutt, she says, "What are they a-doin' there?"

I says, "Oh, nothink."

She says, "It's music. Oh, law, the band," she says, "as I doats on. Come on," and 'urries down one of them wide streets where the soldiers was a-walkin' up to where there's a 'igh column, with Bonyparty on the top. Well, when them soldiers got there, they stops, and there wasn't many on 'em, and not much of a band to speak on; and so I tells Mrs. Archbutt.

"Oh!" she says, "they'll play directly as is awfully grand."

We was a-standin' talkin' agin that column, when they set up all of a sudden a-beatin' them drums that loud as made me jump out of my skin.

I says, "Mrs. Archbutt, it's my opinion as it's a riverlution broke out, as werry often 'appens, and they're a-goin' to fire; so," I says, "let's run for it," and jest then the 'orns and trumpets blowed

like mad, and I takes to my 'eels, and runs like anythink; but, as bad luck would 'ave it, I fell over a old gentleman's poodle-dog, as would 'ave bit me, no doubt, only for a little wirework thing as he wore over 'is mouth as stopped him, but 'is 'owls was awful; and if the old feller didn't call me wile names, and 'it on the ground with 'is cane as come down a topper on my foot, as gave me that hagony as I give him a pretty good-un over the shins with my umbreller.

Up come the police, as I couldn't make comprehend nothink; and if that fool Mrs. Archbutt didn't set up a squealin' as made things ten times wuss, and we should 'ave been locked up, only a party as was comin' by, as were English, explained matters for me; not as I said anythink about the riverlution, but only as the drums and trumpets 'ad give me a sudden fright, and so they 'ad, and when I did get 'ome I was more dead than alive; and we was 'ome fust after all.

I'm sure the 'eadache as I got was that wiolent, thro' the shock of them sojers, as I never will believe didn't mean mischief, only they're afraid for to do it, for that Emperor he do keep 'em in proper order; and quite right too, for I'm sure it quite made my blood boil for to see one of them picters of that there lovely Queen, and her two pretty dears of children, all a-standin' behind a

table a-bein' insulted that gross by a parcel of fish-fags as is a-'owlin' at her. I only wish as I'd been Queen, I'd pretty soon 'ave 'ad the sojers out and at 'em; and so she would, only her good gentleman as were King were that easy, as he stood and let 'em cut 'is 'ead off without a murmur. As is werry well if it was only 'is own 'ead, but a man with a wife and family did ought for to stand up for 'em, as I told Mr. Dobson, as were in the fancy stationery line just down the Bow Road, as let ev'rythink go to ruin, and 'im a-talkin' politics at the "Globe" every evenin', and her upstairs, and the shopman a-fingerin' the till, let alone making away with the goods, as soon come to a end, and no one to thank but 'isself; and that's where it is as this 'ere Bonyparty 'as the pull, thro' a-makin' the streets that wide as he could fire from one end of the place to the other, as always makes me feel nervous a-crossin', let alone them busses as comes thunderin' along with them cart-'orses a-gallopin', and makin' a row as is enough for to terrify anyone as ain't used to it. But as to Mrs. Archbutt, she's a downright idjot, as will stick right in the middle of the road and scream, and was as near done for as ever I see anyone atween a buss and a cart of stones, and 'owever she come out alive I can't make out, tho' dreadful bedaubed; and they did want 'er to go to

the 'ospital, but I says, "Never!" for well I knows their ways as don't stick at nothin', but will cut you open alive jest to see what's the matter with you, as is carryin' things a little too far, I should say, as never forgive a young fellow in the name of Aldridge, as were a medical student, and was always a-tryin' 'is experiments on dogs and cats, and cut 'is own finger one day over some of 'is tricks as werry nigh carried 'im off, and did ought to be a-warnin' to anyone.

The way as Brown went on at me a-supposin' as a riverlution might break out was downright aggrawatin', but all as I says is, what 'as been may be; and certingly it would be a sin and a shame for to let them mobs tear the place to bits, as is done up that lovely as you never did, and quite a pleasure for to see; and the only thing as I can't a-bear is them stairs, as is werry often that slippy as it's as much as your life's worth to go up 'em, as I knows to my cost, for we was a-livin' up pretty 'igh, and goin 'ome one night along with Mr. and Mrs. Archbutt that tired as I didn't know 'ow to put one leg afore the other, and jest as we got pretty near the top, and me a-goin' fust with the candle, I jest remembered as I 'adn't got the key, and I turns round sharp, and says to Mr. Archbutt, "Jest step back, and get the key." He's rather 'ard of 'earin', and didn't ketch what I says; and as to 'er she was that

short of breath, as speak she couldn't; so he kep' on a-comin' up, and jest then a party as lived on the same floor opened 'is door sudden, and the rush of wind blowed out the light, and he come out with a basket fust, and not a-seein' me so close, ketched me in the back with it thro' me bein' turned round for to speak to Mr. Archbutt, and sent me with a flop agin Mr. Archbutt, and we all come down them stairs that rush higgley-piggley, as the sayin' is, as brought the people out from the floor below, and there we was all on the landin' a-strugglin' as nat'rally thought we was mad or in liquor, and it's a mercy as we wasn't hurt dangerous, and no bones broke, but only a lump on the back of old Archbutt's 'ead as big as a pigeon's egg; and the key in the door all the time, thro' Brown bein' come in and gone to bed, and in a nice temper at me a-wakin' 'im up, and says quite savage—

"If you likes a-goin' about till this hour, you might come in like a Christshun, and not like a ragin' wild beast."

I says, "Brown, I ain't a wild beast. As to hours, it's only jest on eleven, as you'd call early in London, and I'm sure it's a mercy as I'm here at all, for of all the falls as ever I've 'ad, this is the wust."

"Oh," he says, "you're always a-tumblin' about, but 'as got as many lives as a cat."

I felt that 'urt at Brown a-comparin' me to a cat, but didn't say nothink.

"So," he says, "why, I do believe as you've been a-smokin'."

I says, "Don't be that insultin', Brown," as 'ad only been for to 'ear the music at the Caffee Shantun, and never see more lovely dressed parties, not as they was ladies, for they sung werry bold and loud, and when they come round a-askin' parties for a trifle, they was downright ugly, and that thick in powder all over their backs and arms, as they must 'ave put it on with the dredger, I should say.

So I says to Mrs. Archbutt, when one 'ad done a 'ollerin', as I didn't think much on 'er.

"Why," says a party as spoke English remarkable well, "she's one of them famous singers as sings afore the Emperor 'isself, and 'as refused thousands as 'ad been offered 'er for to go to the Operer."

"Well," I says, "she must be a fool for to sing out 'ere in the open hair for 'apence, when she could get thousands at the Operer." Not as I thought much of 'er singin', as bawled that loud, and no chicken neither, as any one could see thro' all 'er paint and powder, as is a bad thing, and only makes parties look old and wrinkly the sooner, as some will do it, for I've 'eard my dear mother say as she remembered well a party as were enamelled, as must 'ave led a wretched life, for she dursn't smile, nor

shed a tear, and if she dared to sneeze, would have shook it all off.

I do think as I never were so tired as arter that Exhibishun, for as to the wittles there, it ain't what I fancies, but is kegmegy stuff, as you 'ave to pay thro' the nose for, as I knows to my cost, thro' 'avin' to pay a lot of money for a dinner as I calls muck, and so it were.

I'm sure the stuff as they called soup wasn't nothink but 'ot water, with a lot of that wermyselly in it, and a rubbishin' bit of a patty as they calls a wolly-wong, and then a bit of beef as were that coarse and stringy as I couldn't a-bear the sight on, with a bit of cheese, and some werry washy pertaters. The best part of my dinner were bread and butter, and as to the wine, it was stomach-ache all over, so I took some bottled ale.

I ain't much of a 'and at their coffee, and as to their brandy, it's downright beastly.

So I says, "I tell you what it is; this 'ere dinner cost us pretty near five shillin's a-head, so I don't do it no more, for we get werry good plain wittles where we're a-stoppin', as is a good solid breakfast, and a good meat tea. So," I says, "we'll take a snack at some of them English places where we knows what to ask for; but," I says, "none of your foreign delicacies," as they persuaded me was delicious in Russher, as I went into and 'ad some stuff give me

that were downright train-oil, that rank and green; and to see them nasty beasts a-drinkin' tea out of tumblers, with a slice of lemon, like negus, in it, and the waiters that dressed out in their silk coats, and a young fieldmale as looked werry outlandish.

I do say as the Dutch gal's caps was prettiest, and not so bold as them Greeks, as I didn't like the looks on myself; but I must say as whatever them French means by a-grinnin' and larfin' at them Chinese parties, I can't make out, for whatever is the French but foreigners theirselves, so needn't talk, I'm sure, for of all the figgers as some on 'em is I never did, and as to wittles, why they'll eat anythink, and seem to enjoy it, as the werry look on it gives me quite a turn.

Miss Tredwell, she's one of them as must make 'erself out to know everythink, and she says it's no use a-dinin' at the Esposishin', as she will call it; we did ought to go to dine at the Pally Royal, as is where the quality all goes, and Kings and Queens did use to live in.

"Ah," says I, "for my part, give me a 'umble meal as do not envy no Kings and Queens their ways, as is far too grand for me," as I know'd something about, thro' 'avin' seen the tables laid out when Queen Wictoria was a-goin' to dine with the Lord Mayor, when she was fust queen, and am

quite sure as I shouldn't 'ave eat nothin' for starin' about me.

"Oh," says Miss Tredwell, "Kings and Queens don't live no longer at the Pally Royal."

I says, "No, I don't suppose as they do, and couldn't eat no dinner if they did without their 'eads on;" as I said, to 'ave a cut at 'er, as is always a-showin' off 'er learnin'.

I see as it made 'er wild, that illusion, for she can't a-bear for no one to know nothin' but 'erself, as I ain't a-goin' to put up with no such nonsense; not as ever she comes that rubbish afore Brown, as soon set 'er down, when she begun a-showin' off about Bonyparty's battles, as she didn't even know where they was fought.

Well, she kep' on a-talkin' so about the Pally Royal, as at last we said as we'd go, and it is a lovely place certingly, as did used once to be the gamblin' 'ouses all round, and Brown said as he'd read all about it, and 'ow parties would lose all their money, and then go out in the gardings for to blow their brains out, as 'adn't many for to blow, I should say, if they'd be that foolish for to go and lose all their money, and their lives into the bargain.

So Brown says, "Now, I tell you what it is, I ain't a-goin' in for none of your rubbishin' dinners at a low price, as is throwin' the money away; but let's pay a decent price for a good dinner."

"Oh," says Miss Tredwell, "there's the dinner of Europe, as comes to four francs altogether, as seems a good sum," so we went to 'ave it; but, law bless you, it sounded a good deal, but wasn't nothink, really. As to the soup, it was all tapioca, as is a thing I don't 'old with myself; and then come a bit of fish, about two mouthfuls; and then they give us a bit of weal, as wasn't bad; but not no wegetables, nor melted butter with it; and then there come some fried artichokes, as werry nigh proved the end of Mrs. Archbutt, for they was all them prickly leaves fried that hartful in batter as you couldn't tell what they was, and she's a 'arty eater, and eats a deal too fast, and if she didn't take and bolt a bit of that artichoke, as stuck in 'er throat, and I thought as she must 'ave bust everythink a-coughin'; 'er 'usband, deaf as he is, could 'ear 'er, and took and give 'er a punch that wiolent in the back as put 'er temper out, as I must say is aggrawatin', and she gave 'im a back-'ander; up come the waiters, and one feller says, in 'is broken English, as he couldn't allow no fight.

I says, "Who's a-fightin', you born fool, don t you see as your rubbish 'as werry nigh choked the lady," as by that time 'ad got 'er breath agin, and she was a-goin' on at 'er 'usband, as she said 'is blow was the cause on it all. I says, "No' it's this

stuff as is like eatin' grass, and werry nigh slipped down my throat, and is a shameful take in." Brown, he says "As it weren't, for every one know'd as artichokes was dangerous things." It quite upset me, to see Mrs. Archbutt, not as I can say as it spilte my dinner, for they didn't bring us nothink more but some bits of bones of fowls, as I got a bit of the back and the bone of the wing. Certingly, the salad looked nice, but too much ile in it for me, and arter that they brought us a hice each, as I wouldn't 'ave touched on a hempty stomach for the world; so Miss Tredwell she eat mine as well as 'er own, and nicely she paid for it afore the night was out; we 'ad wine allowed, as I can't a-bear, and keep a-warnin' Miss Tredwell agin, a-knowin' as she was subject to the cramp; and besides that, she took and eat cherries as they give for desert. It was one of them dinners as sounds werry well with nothink in it arter all, and glad I was for to get out in the gardings, and 'ave a little somethink, as I don't 'old with their coffee and no milk, but likes a drop of brandy-and-water 'ot for to settle them dinners, as is no real nourishment in 'em, tho' Miss Tredwell did keep on a-sayin' as it was the best dinner as ever she'd 'ad.

"Well, then," I says, "no wonder, you're such a weazel of a figger."

She says, "I'd rather be a weazel as isn't nearly

so like to pop as a porpoise," as I know'd she meant at me, but wouldn't notice, and was all false, for I'm sure she eat a 'arty tea off cold weal and 'am, when we got 'ome as I don't consider too much on good at night, and altogether so it proved with Miss Tredwell.

We was all pretty well fagged, for we'd been on our legs near all day, so agreed as we'd go to bed early, as we was a-goin' to Wersales in the mornin'. I was jest a-droppin' off to sleep when I 'eard some one a-groanin' and a-callin' in the next room as were Miss Tredwell's, and only diwided by a door from ourn; so I gets out of bed, and says to 'er thro' the door, "Whatever is it?"

She says, "Oh, I'm that bad, I'm a-dyin'."

So I 'urries in, and there she was bad enough with cramps and spavins as made 'er yell agin.

I didn't know what to do, but slips on a flannin' gown, and goes down to the parties as keeps the 'ouse, as lives across the court-yard there for to ask if they'd got any 'ot water, as it wasn't more than 'arf-past eleven, and as luck would 'ave it, thro' being English, and some parties a-comin' late, there was bilin' water for tea, and when I told the good lady, she says, "Oh! I've got a 'ot-water bottle as 'll be jest the thing;" and she fills it up for me, and I wraps it up in my flannin' gown, and upstairs I goes all of a 'urry, and when

'arf way, remembered as I'd forgot the light as I'd left down below. I must say as I was pretty nigh out of breath altogether, and thinks as I can find my way up, a-knowin' as there was lots of lucifers about the place. So on I goes, and when I got near the room I 'eard awful groans; so I says, "Law, poor thing, she must be in hagony to make that noise over it." So in I goes all in the dark, and says, "Here, my dear, this'll do you good," and puts the 'ot-water bottle on 'er chest, as I thought, when I 'eard a roar like ten thousand bulls in French and a man's woice; so sketches up the bottle and rushes out with it, I run agin Brown, who was a-comin' to look arter me with a light, 'avin' 'eard me go into the wrong room, as sure enough I 'ad, and nearly frightened a old Frenchman to death, as was only a-snorin' as I took for groans; but the water was 'ot enough for to comfort Miss Tredwell, as I give 'er a dose of mixture as I always carries about with me, and stopped with 'er till she dropped off, and in the mornin' she was all right, and werry thankful, and I don't think as she'll be so full of jeers any more about me.

Where we was a-stoppin' was werry comfortable all but the stairs, and bein' overlooked as is downright dreadful 'ow them French do go on with their winders that wide open, as you can see right into the rooms over the way; leastways across

the court-yard as our room looked into, and glad I was to get 'em, for the fust night I was in front of the 'ouse, and get a wink I couldn't for the noise as never ceased, and them busses a-thunderin' along, and I says to the good lady as is English too, and looks arter the 'ouse, and that obligin' as I never did, I says, "Mum, whenever do them French get any rest?"

She says, "I can't tell, for they're at it all day long, and night too, and Sundays, and all."

"Yes," I says, "and more shame for 'em to be a-workin' all day Sunday; leastways, more shame for the masters as makes the poor men work, as every one do require rest one day in the week;" not as I 'olds with them as says as you mustn't take no amusement of a Sunday; but as to work that's a werry different thing, and I'm sure there was Miss Tredwell a-goin' on about the Papists a-sayin' as it were their faults; and I says, "You'll escuse me as 'ave been in Germany among the Protestants as was all workin' the same, and as to the theayters and balls, there was more a-goin' on Sunday than any other day."

She says, "As the Prince of Wales didn't ought to 'ave gone to the races on Sunday as was out at Chantilly."

I says, "You don't know as he did go, for some say he didn't, and if he did, that's 'is business,

and what nobody didn't ought to interfere with." I says to Miss Tredwell, "If you thinks it wrong, don't you go; but," I says, "you leave others alone to do as they likes."

I know'd as I were 'ittin' of 'er 'ard, for, bless you, she went out Sunday evenin' and see the dancin' along with some others, and no doubt would have danced 'erself, only nobody didn't ask 'er.

As I was a-sayin', tho' comfortable in Paris, when I mentioned to Brown about goin' out to where the Wellses was a-stoppin', he took to it, and so did Mr. and Mrs. Archbutt; but law, Miss Tredwell, she quite took on, and I says to 'er, "Well," I says, "you can stop 'ere, then."

"What," she says, "a young person like me, without no protection," for she'd 'ad a reg'lar row with 'er aunt, as is Mrs. Paine, a-comin' across, as were a old quarrel, as was brought up agin aboard of the steamer, about a young man as Miss Tredwell said as 'er aunt stopped from a-marryin' as is downright rubbish, for I'm sure no man in his senses would 'ave 'er, as he'd take all for wuss and none for better, tho' she 'ave got a bit of money, leastways will 'ave when 'er aunt is dead and gone. They 'ad them 'igh words, as sent Miss Tredwell into the dead sulks; so 'er uncle said as she'd better jine our party, and so she did, wuss luck. So I says to 'er, "Look 'ere, if you're a-goin' to

be with us, you must do as we do, and not be a-findin' fault with everybody and everythink, and if you don't like our ways, you can go back to your aunt, as was a-stoppin' out at Wersales."

But she says, "Never."

So I says, "Then stop 'ere, or come with us, and that's all as I've got to say;" and then she took to snivellin', a-sayin' as I'd been as good as a mother to 'er, illudin' to the 'ot bottle, as the old Frenchman didn't seem to care about, for he took 'isself off the werry next mornin' afore breakfast, tho' fully esplained as I didn't mean no insults, but he couldn't a-bear no English, and wouldn't believe as I didn't do it for the purpose.

We went out to Passy the werry next day but one arter the 'ot bottle business; but the weather was sich, I do think as I never see sich rain a-comin' down as was water-spouts.

I'm sure as Mrs. Wells was glad to see us, and we was all put to lodge in the same 'ouse, and werry clean and nice it were; but 'ad for to go out to meals, as was all took in another 'ouse, and good plain wittles, leastways a good breakfast and tea, with lots of cold meat and eggs, with bread and butter, as were a meal in itself, and a thing as I relishes. It was werry cool and pleasant, and as to that Bore de Boulone, it's downright beautiful, and the next mornin' me and Mrs. Archbutt, arter

breakfast, went for a stroll, for I couldn't stand that Exhibishun for a day or two—it do confuse my 'ead that dreadful; so Mrs. Archbutt and me agreed as we'd stop at 'ome, and the others went off, and then we goes off on the quiet, a-wanderin' about that Bore, and it certingly is lovely, with parties a-walkin'; as you'll meet sometimes a weddin', all dressed in their best, as the bridegroom looks more like a funeral thro' bein' in black, and I must say as the bride looks bold with nothink on but a wreath, as don't seem suitable for out of doors.

I was a-walkin' on slow a-sayin' as it were lovely, with parties a-ridin' about on their 'orses and carriages, and just then a fat Frenchman, on a bright yaller-lookin' 'orse, came a-bustin' along with a cigar and red ribbon in the button-'ole of 'is coat, so I 'ollers "'Igh!" to Mrs. Archbutt, and touches 'er with my umbreller, as was jest a-steppin' across the path, as looks like a foot path as 'orses didn't ought to come on.

Law, that Frenchman's 'orse; he rared, and plunged, and dashed, and the Frenchman, he yelled and ketched 'old of the saddle, as I could see wasn't no rider.

So I says, "He'll be off," and sure enough he was, not as he pitched on 'is 'ead, but come down soft, as the road is made so for the purpose. Some one

ketched the 'orse, and up they all come to me, and the Frenchman, he was werry much bedaubed, and one of them chaps in the cock 'at, he come up, too, and all begun a-jabberin'.

So I says to Mrs. Archbutt, "No doubt he's 'ired the 'orse, and wants for us to say as it were not 'is fault; but 'ow can we, thro' not a-knowin' the French for it all;" but if that Frenchman couldn't speak English, leastways enough for to be abusive, and he call me a old dog, and said as I was the beggar as 'ad 'it 'is 'orse with my umbreller, as never touched the animal. I give 'im a bit of my mind, tho', as soon shet 'im up, and off he went, but didn't get on that 'orse no more, and I says to 'im, as he was a-goin' off, "Next time as you comes out for a ride, try a donkey," as made all them French bust out a-larfin', as must 'ave understood what I said, and it's my opinion as they understands a deal more than they pretends to.

We'd 'ad a late breakfast, and so I got some refreshments at a place in the Bore, as come to a good deal, tho' only a bottle of beer and a roll with a bit of sausage, as they give us ready enough; and then I says to Mrs. Archbutt, "But suppose as we was to walk Paris way a-bit." As she were agreeable, and on we goes a-dawdlin' and a-restin' on them seats, as certingly is werry convenient, and jest as we got agin the Arch de Triomf

as they calls it, I says, "We'll wait for a 'buss as 'll take us right into Paris as far as ever we likes to go. But," I says, "they do say as the thing is to see the wiew from the top of this 'ere arch."

"Oh," she says, "I should like to see it above everythink."

I was sorry as I'd spoke, for she's that stout as stairs is death to 'er, and can't a-bear to be thought it, and that touchy if you illudes to it.

So I says, "Well, it's a good many stairs."

She says, "Never mind, we can take it easy."

It's all werry fine for to talk of takin' it easy, but there's some things as you can't take easy, and stairs is one on 'em, for I'm sure I took them stairs crawlin' like, and 'adn't 'ardly no breath left when 'arf way up, and as to Mrs. Archbutt, when she got to the top, I thought as die she would. She set down then and there, and quite fought for 'er breath, for the wind was that 'igh as it was enough to take you off your legs.

So a-seein' 'er that bad, I goes to 'er and unties 'er bonnet and if the wind didn't take it clean off 'er 'ead, bonnet, cap, 'air and all, as she got fastened in

If you'd 'eard 'er scream, and me too, you'd ave thought we was killed. Up come some parties as showed as they wasn't ladies and gentlemen, for

they roared with larfture as soon as they see Mrs. Archbutt a-settin' there 'elpless in 'er bald 'ead.

It wasn't no use me a-sayin' as I were sorry, for she wouldn't 'ear reason, and kep' a-sayin' as it would be 'er death. I tied 'er pocket-'ankercher and mine over 'er 'ead the best as I could, and as soon as she'd got 'er breath, down we goes, and all the way 'ome she kep' on at me a-sayin' as 'er bonnet was quite as good as new, as is only a covered shape, and never become 'er thro' bein' blue, as she's as yaller as a guinea, and don't suit with blue, and could show her nose anywheres without 'er 'air, as was a dreadful old gasey with the partin' all wore out; and I'm sure she'll look all the better in a new one, as we was a-goin' to get 'er at once; but she'd got that awful cold, with the rheumatics in 'er 'ead, as bed was 'er place all the next day, and a nice job I 'ad a-nursin' 'er, as cross as two sticks, and that wild with Archbutt, as said she did ought to know better than go a-climbin' up places with 'er weight; and so we 'ad to put off our journey to Wersales, as was as well, for the weather was werry lowery.

It was towards evenin' as Miss Tredwell she come in and says, "Oh, we've 'ad sich a delightful day, and been to see all them lovely picters as they've got in the Louver, as is a place as you've

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got to see, Mrs. Brown, but, p'raps, won't understand, as is that classical."

So I says, "See the Louver, in course, I 'ave often, as I don't consider a decent place for a female; and I'm sure parties as it belongs to did ought to be ashamed of theirselves not to 'ave them picters finished proper, and put the clothes on them heathen creeturs, as is left a-standin' there without a rag to cover 'em, tho' certingly fine-limbed figgers; but I don't 'old with them bold ways myself—not as they looks much like 'uman bein's, as I can see, but, in course, was different in them days."

So Miss Tredwell says, as all she cared to look at was the kings and queens, and sich like.

"Yes," I says, "they certingly do 'ave fine 'eads of 'air them kings and queens," as no wonder, 'avin' to stand bare-'eaded in the open hair, as you see 'em in them picters, and some on 'em 'avin' to ride thro' the town with nothink on but a 'ead of 'air, like the lady at Coventry on 'er bare-backed steed, as goes thro' Coventry once a-year. Now, I've 'eard say as Peeping Tom got struck blind for a-darin' to look out of the winder at 'er, as certingly wasn't decent behaviour.

So Miss Tredwell, she says, "Oh! Mrs. Brown, 'ow can you be so coarse a illudin' to sich subjects

afore the oppersite sect," for we was a-settin' all together over our tea a-chattin' agreeable.

Brown, he, in course, jined agin me, so I didn't say no more; but next time as that impident minx 'as the cramps, she may 'oller for me, as she won't find a-gettin' out of my bed in a 'urry agin for 'er.

It was agreed as we was to go to Wersales in the mornin', as Mrs. Wells said as she were glad 'ad been put off, thro' 'avin' not 'ad 'er things as was lost in the train till that werry day, and certingly 'ad not been a figger for to go to no grand sights.

I don't think as ever I did 'ear quite sich a grumbler as that old Wells; the row as he made over 'is meals, a-findin' fault with everythink, a-sayin' as the 'am were too salt, and the tea not strong, and the coffee thick, as were not true, for I'm as partickler as anybody; and tho', of course, things wasn't as nice as if you'd only a small family, they was all good and wholesome, and quite as good as ever he got at 'ome; for I'm sure there was 'is betters there a-takin' of tea and cold meat quite thankful, as it's wonderful they could supply such a party so well; and while we was at tea, there was a large party in the next room, as were a school a-singin' beautiful all together, and werry nice it sounded. But somehow I was a little tired,

went to bed in good time, well a-knowin' as I'd a 'ard day's work afore me.

I never did see nothink grander in my life than that Notter Dam, as is the big Paris church, and somethink like one, too, and that beautiful kep', and all lovely, though Miss Tredwell kep' a-runnin' on it down, and a-sneerin' at, and sayin' as she didn't 'old with it.

I says, "In my opinion you did ought for to stop outside as ain't fit to be in a sacred place like this, as parties is a-sayin' of their prayers in, and you a-goin' on like that."

"Oh," she says, "it's all superstition."

I says, "And what do you think as they would say about your way." I says, "If you don't like it you can leave it, as nobody asked you to come in;" and I says "if I'd my way, I'd precious soon 'ave you out."

Jest then Brown come up with us as 'ad been to the top of the tower, as I didn't seem to see a-goin' up myself, and as to Mrs. Archbutt, she quite 'ollered out at the bare thought, no doubt a-rememberin' of her bonnet.

Well Brown 'ad been up all the way along with Archbutt, and when he ketched Miss Tredwell a-jeerin' and a-larfin' at the church, and give her sech a-settin' down as made 'er take to the sulks, and walks 'erself

out of the church, as it wasn't the place for 'er.

Of all the lovely things as ever you see, it's the clothes as the ministers wear, and the plate as is gold, and was all stole and throwed into the river by thieves in a net for to 'ide it, as marked the spot where they'd sunk it by a cork as was tied to the net, so in course didn't float down the stream, as is a tremenjous current, and so caught the eye of some one as was on the look-out, and if they didn't fish up all the lot, as was a nice sell for them rascally thieves, and glad I was to 'ear it, the wagabones, tho' it's no wonder, as they'd like to have them as is that waluable, not as they're too good, for nothink can't be when you comes to think what they're intended for, and werry solemn too; and they was a-beginnin' to sing lovely with the orgin, as I stopped and listened to, and who should we meet in that church but Mr. Ditcher, as I 'adn't seen afore not this time as we'd been in Paris, and glad to see 'im, a-knowin' as he'd show us everythink; for Brown, he'd walked off with Archbutt, thro' not a-carin' for to see them things.

When we got out there was Miss Tredwell a-sayin' as she was ready for to die with tiredness.

"Well, then," I says, "take a 'buss to where we've agreed to meet," as was that English place near the Magalin.

She says, as she shouldn't think of going about alone.

"Well, then," I says, "be civil and come along with us as is a-goin' to look at one or two things more as is near at 'and," and Mr. Ditcher 'ad promised to take us to, as is 'is good-natured ways; so we went for to see the Pally de Justiss and the Saint Chapell, as one of them French kings brought from the 'Oly Land, as is werry ancient, and I'm sure the place as he did used to say 'is prayers in, as he could look thro' into the chapel by a little 'ole, was a nice dungeon of a place; and talkin' of dungeons, reminds me as Mr. Ditcher got us in for to see the Consurgery, where the poor dear French queen were kep' for two nights and a day afore they murdered 'er, by a-draggin' 'er on a cart to the scaffoldin', with 'ardly a rag to 'er back.

It give me quite a turn when I see the awful place, as it were, for to keep any one in, let alone a queen, as bore it all that meek, for I know werry well as I'd have tore them willins of soldiers' eyes out, as never left 'er alone a moment, but set there a-watchin' 'er, the undecent wagabones, as wasn't men, but devils, I do believe. I felt that sorry for 'er as I could 'ave kissed the ground as she trod upon, to think of what she must 'ave suffered, as I've seen the picters of 'er with a 'ead of 'air all piled up and powdered, a-settin' in state like a

queen, and then another as showed 'er in that dungeon a-waitin' for death, as must 'ave been a 'appy release indeed.

I 'ope as it wasn't wicked on me for to feel glad when they showed us the dungeon next to 'ern, where they shet up in 'is turn one of the 'ead willins 'as 'ad done it all in the name of Robberspear, as died in hagony with 'is jaw-bone broke afore they cut 'is good-for-nothink 'ead off; and I do say, if I was the French I wouldn't allow none of them picters to be showed as represents them awful times, as is a downright disgrace to 'uman natur', as is bad enough, goodness knows.

I was glad to get out of that place, as is a prison now, and I see them prisoners thro' a gratin' as was a-waitin' for their dinner or somethink to eat; and it give me quite a turn to look at 'em, and took werry good care not to be out last, for fear as I might be left behind, as I well remembers a-'earin' of a tale of a party as went down somewheres underground for to see the cutty-combs, and whatever he could want to see 'em for I can't think, as ain't showed no more now-a-days, and if he didn't get shet in thro' a-lingerin' behind and not keepin' up with the guide, and wasn't found for months arter, crouchin' behind a door, as 'ad eat 'is own shoulders away with famishin' 'unger, as is a sharp thorn and will drive parties to eat one another, the same as

I've 'eard aboard ship, as is their 'abits when lost at sea; tho' for my part I'd rather starve to death a thousand times than eat a fellow-creetur.

We'd jest come out of Notter Dam when Mr. Ditcher says to me, "Mrs. Brown, mum, 'ave you see the Morg?"

I says, "Whoever's he?"

"Oh!" he says, "it's the French dead-'ouse, where they puts any one as comes to a accidental end, and them, p'raps, as 'as met with foul play."

"Well," I says, "them ain't things as I cares to see."

"Oh," he says, "you're that near as you'd better step in."

So I says, "Werry well," for Mr. Ditcher he knows Paris that well, and all the dodges, thro' 'avin' lived there over twenty years and married to a French woman, and he'd know'd Brown some years afore, and was that glad for to see us in Paris; and if it 'adn't been for 'im I shouldn't never 'ave seen or know'd 'arf as I do know about Paris, as is one of the dodgiest places as ever you 'eard tell on.

So, I says to 'im, "Mr. Ditcher, if you takes me there, I'll go." So Miss Tredwell said as she wouldn't for the world, no more wouldn't Mrs. Archbutt. So me and Mr. Ditcher went in together, and it certingly did give me a turn when I see

three mortal dead bodies laid there in a glass case, a-lookin' that frightful as made me feel sick at 'art, for I couldn't bear to see them layin' there dead drowned, and all their poor clothes a-'angin' over their 'eads, as showed as want 'ad drove many a one to do it; and I was a-sayin' to Mr. Ditcher, "Ah! if them clothes could speak they'd tell many a tale of misery and want;" and I says, "let's come away, poor things, for we can't do 'em no good, and it's thankful as I am as there ain't no one there as I can indemnify."

Just as we was turnin' away we met an old woman with 'er grey 'airs a-streamin' from under 'er cap, as come a-rushin' in and looked that distracted as I couldn't but stare at 'er, and says to Mr. Ditcher, "Look there," when she give a scream as went right thro' me, and fell flat on the stones with that crash just at my feet as made me nearly jump out of my skin. Mr. Ditcher and me picked 'er up, and if he didn't know 'er, and told me all about 'er arterwards, tho' fust we got 'er to the 'ospital, and then he said as it were that melancholy, and he know'd it all to be true, for it 'appened in the house as he were a-livin' in, and he know'd 'er well, as were a poor widder with a only boy as she doted on, and would work 'erself to death, poor soul, for to let 'im 'ave pocket-money, as was kep' short thro' bein' in the army, as is not allowed much

more than three farthin's a-day, as don't go far in tobacco and beer.

But he was the pride of 'er 'art, and took that pleasure in seein' 'im in 'is uniform, as I'm sure I should be werry sorry for to see a boy of mine in, as is a disfigurement, and I can't a-bear the sight of them red breeches; and as to bein' a sojer, it was nearly the death of me when my Joe listed, but the French is different, thro' bein' a blood-thirsty race; and Mr. Ditcher said as this poor old soul seemed quite cut up when 'er son's time was up as never settled down steady like, but wouldn't take no pleasure in 'is work, as were a cabinet-maker by trade; but, law, 'owever can you expect any one to settle down to work arter bein' a sojer.

Well, this young feller he fell in love with a werry nice young gal, as 'er father wouldn't 'ear on it, and 'ad agreed as she was to marry another party, as she didn't care nothink about; and the poor gal she took it so to 'art, as for to go and pison 'erself. And Mr. Ditcher said as he never should forget that young man's face the night as she died, as was only four days ago; and he come into 'is mother's shop, and kissed 'er, a-lookin' ghastly white, and says, "Good-night, mother."

She says, "Where are you a-goin' to-night, Antoine?"

He only says, "To bed—to sleep;" and out he

goes, but never went to bed, and only to 'is long sleep, for he didn't come in to breakfast in the mornin'; and then some one come and told the poor old lady, as the young gal, her son's sweet'art, 'ad pisoned 'erself the night afore.

Then she says, "My boy is dead too; I know it—I know it;" and if she didn't rush out of the place, and went down to that Morg, but there wasn't no body of her son there. But she wouldn't give it up, but come again twice that day, and the fust thing the next mornin', without finding 'im, as was only brought in just afore we went in to see it; and that's 'ow it were as we see 'er.

I do believe I felt as much for that poor soul as if she 'adn't been a foreigner, as 'er poor pale, distracted face 'aunted me; and I says, when I got 'ome, as I'd never go to see no more Morgs, and, before the week was out, Mr. Ditcher told me as the poor old lady were dead, and no doubt a broken 'art, as I'm sure it would be my death for to see a boy of mine a-layin' in that dreadful place, as I can't get the sight on out of my eyes night nor day.

And we see the 'ospital, as looks like a pallis, and thousands of poor creeturs a-sufferin' there, as is called God's House; and so it is, for comfortin' and relievin' them as is afflicted, and I'm sure them good sisters as nusses them day and night for love

is a beautiful sight alone, and to think of anyone a-doin' on it all for strangers, as is a painful duty by a friend; and that quiet and nice in their ways, as is sich a comfort in a sick-room, and not to be neglected as some of our sick, as whatever can you expect when some of them 'ospital nusses did used to be downright wretches, as would rob and ill-use the sick, as 'appened to poor 'Liza Burress many years ago, as I remember, in a 'ospital, as died neglected, and only found out thro' a poor gal as was in the same ward as told of their goin's on; but there's some, I'm told, as is werry good, and improvin' every day.

Miss Tredwell, she didn't seem for to care about the 'ospital, and she says, "I do believe, Mrs. Brown, as you're a downright reg'lar nuss."

"Well," I says, "and what if I am—where's the 'arm? and you may be glad on my 'elp yet afore you dies;" and I walks on, and we leaves the 'ospital; and I makes my obedience to one of them sisters, and says, "It's sorry I am, mum, not for to be able to tell you, as I thinks, you're a hornament to your sect," as Mr. Ditcher told 'er in French, and she shook 'ands with me quite friendly, as I felt more proud on than if she'd been a queen.

By the time as we'd done that we was reg'lar done up, and glad for to ketch a 'buss as took us

to the Magalin; and there we met the others as 'ad been elsewheres, and glad I was for to 'ave a good draught of beer and some cold meat, for I can't stand the wish-wash wittles and drink as the French lives on, as don't seem to 'ave no strength in it, and some on it is downright muck, for never shall I forget bein' perswaded for to taste a snail, as I shouldn't have knowed what it was to look at it all but the shell.

Mr. Ditcher, he was along with us, and said as they was considered fine things for the chest, as I'd got a nasty cold on myself, so I agreed as I'd 'ave some. It give me a bit of a turn when they brought 'em, and a little fork a-purpose to pick 'em out with; and nasty black stuff it looked as we did pick out, and we all agreed as we'd taste 'em together. So Mr. Ditcher, as is full of his fun and uncommon good company, he says, "Now, then, all together," and we all put the bits as we 'ad on our forks into our mouths simultanous. I never did taste nothink like it, and 'opes as I never shall. I didn't look at nobody else, but I rushes to the winder, and so did all the rest; and it wasn't till we'd 'ad brandy round as one on us could touch a bit more dinner; but I will say as them frogs as they eats is nice, that delicate as you might think it was fine small rabbit; not as they're things as I cares about, nor yet about rabbits, partickler them

Ostend ones, as I don't believe is rabbits at all in my 'art.

I never didn't taste no mice, as I'm sure I never should fancy, as must always be a faint smell, tho' I've 'eard say thro' a uncle of mine as 'ad been in Cheyney as them Chinee would eat puppy-dog pie and relish it, but good beef and mutton is all as I cares about, with lamb and weal occasional for a change, tho' I will say as you gets beautiful meat in France, tho' a frightful price, nearly two shillin's a-pound, as is the reason as many is drove to mice and frogs. Their wegetables, they're delicious, but most parties wants a bit of meat once a-day.

Never shall I forget the row as I 'ad at one of them restorongs at the Exhibishun over a bit of beef as they brought me that coarse and underdone, quite soddened as I didn't fancy; for me and Mrs. Archbutt felt peckish at one, and agreed as we'd take a somethink. Well, I was for Spiers and Pond's, but she says, "Oh, no;" she says, "we can 'ave English dinners when at 'ome; let's dine *à la mode de Parry*."

I says, "None of your *à la mode* for me," as is a thing as I never would touch, not even out of the *à la mode* beef shops in London, let alone Paris.

"Oh," she says, "we'll have a somethink as is ready," and so I looks at the cart as I couldn't make nothink on, and the more that waiter jabbered, the

more I didn't understand. So I says, "Oh, bother stop that," I says, "roast beef," and off he goes, and werry soon come back with two plates on it, and a lump of mashed tater by the side, as must 'ave been let overboil, and then won't never mash, but when I see the meat, I says, "What you call?"

He says, "Ah. Oh, yes."

As was all the English as the idjot know'd, tho' they'd wrote up "English spoke 'ere."

I says, "Whatever do you call it?" a-pintin' to my plate.

He says, "Rosbif."

I says, "Never," a-shakin' my 'ead.

He says, "May wee say filly." I could swear them was 'is words.

I says, "I thought so; filly indeed. I won't eat none of your 'orseflesh," I says. "Come on, Mrs. Archbutt."

Well, that waiter, he danced about us and says, "pay ya." I says, "Jammy." He calls another as ketched 'old of my redicule. I give 'im a shove as sent 'im agin another as were carryin' a lot of plates, as sent 'im backwards on a table full of glasses, and they fetches in one of them police, and a interpreter as stood me out as filly meant roast beef. So I had to pay, for there wasn't no standin' agin that fellow, as would swear anythink, for I do believe as in that Exhibishun they was all alike,

them as would say anythink but their prayers, and them they whistles, as the sayin' is; and all I've got to say is, I shan't trust myself in none of them restorongs no more alone, for I'm sure that waiter, he looked as if he could 'ave murdered me, and I do think as he would, only I'd got 'old of my umbreller that firm as looked determined, and so I was to 'ave give 'im a topper if he'd touched me agin, for as I says to him, "Paws off, Pompey," as is French, I knows, for I don't 'old with bein' pulled about by nobody, let alone with their greasy fingers, as left a mark on my sleeve as it was, tho' certingly they are beautiful clean in the general way, and their linen got up that white as never can be washed in cold water, the same as you may see them washerwomen in boats on the river by the 'undred a-washin' away, as wouldn't suit me, and it seems to me as them poor women works 'arder than the men a-sweepin' the streets, and sich like, as is work only fit for slaves, not but what some of them French is nearly as dark as niggers; and there was a young gal in the train with us the day as we was a-goin' to Wersales, as was a downright tea-pot, with a turbin on the top of 'er black wool, as spoke French jest like the white ones, as is what they never can do with the English, as shows as they must be all the same; for I'm sure the langwidge of them Christshun Minstrels is downright

foolishness, and I've 'eard 'em speak the same myself down by the Docks, when they .wasn't up to their larks, with their bones and banjos, and all manner.

They may talk about weather, but all as I've got to say of all the weather as ever I know'd, this 'ere Paris beats it 'oller—a furniss one day and a freezin' the next.

I thought as it were too early for summer things afore I left 'ome, so wore winter ones, as was nearly my death with 'eat, for I did think as I should 'ave melted dead away and yet afraid to change; but it was that warm that I says to Miss Tredwell, "I do think as I must wear my yaller musling to-morrow." She says, "Oh do, for I'm sure you'll look so nice in a musling." But, law, when I come to get it out you'd 'ave thought as it 'ad been in the dirty-clothes bag, it was that dreadful tumbled; but the young woman as waited on us as were that civil she said as it could be ironed out easy, and took it accordin'.

Miss Tredwell she says to me, "You ain't never a-goin' to wear that musling without a jupong."

I says, "Whatever do you mean?"

"Oh," she says, "one of them spring petticoats."

I says, "No crinoline for me."

She says, "Not a crinoline, but," she says, "I'll

show you," and runs to 'er room and fetches one as was only a crinoline on a small scale arter all.

"There," she says; "it's jest enough to make your musling set helegant, and you're welcome to it."

I says, "What are you a-goin' to do without it?"

"Oh," she says, "my dress as I'm a-goin' to wear ain't made for it, so do take it, for I shan't wear it no more."

Well, I must say as when I come to put that musling on it look werry dabby, for in ironin' of it out they'd been and damped it, so as it was as limp as a rag; so I let Miss Tredwell put me on the jupong, and I wore only a light jacket as looked werry nice, tho' I must say as it were werry summery, but it was a 'ot sun tho' 'eavy clouds about.

I thought as I must 'ave bust out a-larfin' in Mrs. Archbutt's face, for if she 'adn't gone and put on a 'at the same as Mrs. Wells 'ad got, and a new wig as curled at the back. Miss Tredwell, she 'ad words with Mrs. Wells jest as we was a-startin', thro' a-sayin' as Mrs. Wells 'ad got 'er parysol, as they'd bought 'em new together the day before.

Of all the hold hasses as ever I did know it's that Archbutt, as will always contradict you about the shortest way, and I'm sure the time as he kep' us a-waitin', with 'im a spreadin' the plan of Paris up

agin a wall and a-disputin' about the way. Brown and Wells 'ad started, so I says to Miss Tredwell, "Let's go by the train, the same as we did yesterday;" and so she agreed, and while old Archbutt was a-talkin' we sloped on the quiet, as the sayin' is, and got to the train.

As soon as ever I were at the station I felt the wind a-blowin' that cool thro' my musling as I says, "Miss Tredwell, I must go back for a warm shawl."

We'd took our tickets, and jest at that moment in come the train, and Miss Tredwell says, "I'll lend you my shawl," and 'urries me down the stairs.

Of all the ill-convenient trains to get into it's them second-class French, for the sides is so steep and the steps that narrer as I couldn't 'ardly climb up at all; but the carriages inside is comfortable, tho' narrer.

Of all the roundabouts it is that way of goin' to the Exhibishun, as seems for to whisk you all round Paris, tho' it gets you there at last.

We was determined, Miss Tredwell and me, for to 'ave a good look at the jewels, as is splendid. I never did see nothin' more lovely than a lot as belongs to a Countess.

"Ah," I says, "fine feathers makes fine birds, but they don't make 'appy ones;" so I 'opes as them diamons isn't got at the price of a 'artache, for I'm

told them French 'usbands is a awdacious lot, a-goin' on all manner, and a-givin' of them diamons to their favorites by the bushel, and often a-neglectin' of their wives.

I says to Miss Tredwell, "Do look there," I says, "'ow careless, to be sure, for to leave them lovely jewels there," for a-layin' outside on the top of one of them glass-cases there was diamons and rubies, as big as the top of your finger, as anybody might take.

The gentleman as was a-standin' there were very perlite, and he smiles and draws his 'and along the case, and if them jewels wasn't inside stuck to the glass.

"Lor," I says, "I could 'ave swore they could 'ave been picked up."

"Yes," says he, "and you ain't the only one as thought the same, for a lady come by the other day, and throwed 'er 'ankercher over them, a-askin' the price of a bracelet for to take up attention, a-thinkin' to take 'em."

"What," I says, "collar the lot? Eh! I hope you don't call sich a individual a lady, as must be only a fieldmale, whether English or French."

That gentleman only smiled, and were that perlite as to show me some lovely things as the Hemperor 'ad bought for 'is good lady; and I'm sure nobody didn't ought to be seen in such things

but queens and princesses, as, in course, must be that dressed for to look like theirselves.

For my part, I do think as the imitations is a deal more showy than the real ones, and, of course, you'd get more for your money; but then, in case of a rainy day, where are you? whilst them lords and dukes can't never be 'ard up, as long as they've got them things to make the money on at a pinch.

I don't think as ever I did see sich a lot of bedsteads, and sideboards, and one thing and the other, as parties can't know what to do with if they 'ad 'em; and altogether the place is that confusin' that you're quite bewildered, and as to findin' your way about, why you're always a-comin' back to the same place; leastways, we was, for that Miss Tredwell would keep a-leadin' me wrong. And there was a pulpit as was stuck in the middle of one passage as we was always a-comin' to, till I got that wild as I couldn't bear it no longer, so takes my own way, and walks thro' the picters, and come out in the middle ile like; and glad I was for to see a seat, and set down all of a 'urry for there wasn't many wacant. I 'adn't no idea as it sloped back slippy like, and there I was a-settin' without my legs a-touchin' the ground.

I was that tired as I didn't care about nothink, and see a good many idjots grinnin', as is their

French ways, for they will laugh at anythink, as is what I calls a friverlous lot.

So I says to Miss Tredwell, "Don't take no notice, let 'em grin;" and we'd set there, I should think, 'arf a 'our, when who should come up but Brown and Mr. Wells.

So Brown says, "Hallo! Martha, draw it mild!"

I says, "Whatever do you mean?"

"Why," he says, "you're a-settin' showin' your legs like anythink."

"Well," I says, "they're my own."

"Yes," he says, "but you needn't come the Menken over us; for, tho' werry good legs in their way, they ain't much to look at."

Jest at the same moment up come Mrs. Archbutt and Mrs. Wells, as both exclaimed, "For goodness' sake, Mrs. Brown, do get up, you're such a figger! Why, we've seen your legs for ever so far off, a good way over your boot tops."

I was rather put out by Mrs. Archbutt's ways, as she was evident put out at me 'avin started afore 'er.

So I says, "My figger, mum, is p'raps as good as others, tho' I mayn't 'ave on a new 'ead of 'air and a 'at," and was a-goin' to get up, but, law, it was a 'ard struggle for me to get on my legs, thro' the seat bein' leather and that deep back, and I thought

as I heerd somethink go snap in that petticoat, but give myself a shake, and all seemed right; so I walks on, and give Mrs. Archbutt a look, for I see 'er a-sneerin'; and jest as I were a-crossin' of the open court, I give a stumble thro' a-ketchin' my foot in somethink as I couldn't make out, and away I went down such a crash on all fours; and when they picked me up, there was that jupong as 'ad slipped down round my feet, and throwed me over.

What to do I didn't know, for there wasn't no cloak-room, nor nothink near at hand, and there I was obligated to walk ever so far all among the crowd, a-carryin' of that jupong, as I'd 'ave throwed away with pleasure, but didn't dare to there. And when I got to what they calls the westiare, that jupong was that broke that it couldn't be wore no more, as I'd been and ketched my foot in it; and if that Miss Tredwell didn't 'ave the face to say as it were worth twelve shillin's, and 'ad cost eighteen, as I don't believe a word on, for I've seed them ticketed ten over and over agin. But Mrs. Wells, she stood my friend, and managed for to pin me up; but I 'ad to go 'ome as soon as I'd took some refreshment, and 'ad to carry the jupong. And if Miss Tredwell didn't expect me to pay 'er twelve shillin's; but I says, "I'll give you eight, as it's more than it's worth, and never

wanted to wear it." And I do believe it was only 'er art as made 'er lend it me, a-'opin' as I might spile it, as she wanted to get rid on thro' being quite gone out.

I always did 'ate borrerin' clothes or lendin' 'em either, as always ends unpleasant, the same as my black welwet cape as I lent to Brown's sister and never see a westment on it agin, as she said as it were took off 'er arm aboard of a Gravesend steamer, as in my opinion she's been and made away with it and won't tell the truth 'onest.

I quite took more to Mrs. Wells arter that day, and 'er and me often 'ad a friendly chat and suited one another, for them others would go a-flyin' off to that Exhibishun with their breakfasts in their throats, and 'er and me did used to take it more quiet, and it was the next day but one as I'd 'ad that mess about the jupong, as 'er and me agreed for to go into Paris by the 'buss, as was got werry nigh at 'and. Well, tho' not dressed over light I felt chilly, and says to 'er, "I'm sure it must be cold out of doors."

As soon as I'd got out I found as the weather 'ad changed, and afore I'd been out long I was downright a-perishin' with cold, and says to Mrs. Wells as I should like a "petty ware," as is what they calls a drop of brandy. She said as she should like the same; so I says, "Let's

stop a bit, and we can soon ketch the 'buss up;" so we stops at one of them caffees, and says to the garsong, "Doo petty wares."

He says somethink gibberish like, and brings in the bottle. I don't think as ever I felt more chilled thro', so I says to 'im, "O sho," as he understood, and brought some 'ot water, and Mrs. Wells and me 'ad a small tumbler a-piece. When we'd 'elped ourselves, that garsong, he come and took away the brandy, as we 'adn't took much out on. Well, we set a-talkin' and a-sippin' of the liquor, as wasn't over strong, till I says, "This won't do; we shan't fall in with them if we don't mind;" and up I jumps and gives the feller one of them cart wheels, as they calls five francs; he says a somethink, and 'olds up 'is two fingers.

I says, "What do you mean?" and he goes and fetches the brandy-bottle, as was almost empty, all but a drop, not more than a tea-spoonful at the bottom.

I says, "We've never drunk all that!"

He begins to jabber and scream; so I goes up to the lady as was a-settin' at the counter, with 'er 'air done werry nice, and bottles all afore 'er, and shows 'er the bottle, and says "Jammy," as means never. I couldn't make nothink of 'er, and if that waiter didn't fetch a fat man out of another place as had been playin' dominoes, and they both begun at me.

Mrs. Wells, she says, "Oh, pay 'em, and let's go."

I says, "Seven francs, as is nearly six shillin's for two sixpenn'orths of brandy and water, never! Jammy," I kep' a-sayin', and if that wagabone of a waiter didn't ketch up my parysol as was a-lyin' on the little marble table, and so I says, "You give it up, or I'll make you," and shakes my fist at 'im; and if that other party didn't call in one of them surjons-de-will, as nearly scared Mrs. Wells to death, and she took and paid the two francs.

I give it 'em pretty 'ot, I can tell you, as I'm sure understood what I meant thro' me a-makin' grimaces, jest like their own ways of goin' on, till that feller as were the proprietor, I fancies, ketched 'old on me by the shoulders, and turned me out of the place, and jest at the door who should come up but a young man as was a-livin' along with us, as spoke French, and if them awdacious wretches didn't show 'im the brandy-bottle, and say as we'd emptied it, as I can swear only took two of them "petty wares" a-piece, and I shouldn't 'ave minded it 'arf so much only I'm pretty sure as that young man didn't believe me; and when we met Brown at the place, as we'd appointed, the fust thing as he said was, "Well, old gal, you've been 'avin' a pretty good turn at the brandy," as made that young man roar

with larfture, and I was that put out as I said I'd go 'ome at once, and would 'ave done it, too, only didn't like to leave Mrs. Wells, as can't a-bear Mrs. Archbutt, and won't speak to Miss Tredwell, as is certingly downright sickening, with 'er hairs a-pretendin' to speak French as she don't know no more on than a cow, in my opinion, and a-goin' on that foolish as made me blush for 'er, for I can't a-bear anythink as is bold in a fieldmale, partikler among foreigners, as is only too glad to pick 'oles in any one's coats.

It was agreed as we'd go to Wersales in a carriage, the lot on us, as was the Archbutts and Wellses, Miss Tredwell, with Brown and me, and a werry nice gentleman, as said as he'd accompany us for to explain things, but that old Archbutt he kep' on a-botherin' about goin' by rail, so he was give in to; not by my will, for he's jest the werry one as I likes to contradict.

I must say as I thinks I was dressed nice, for I'd got on things as made me look uncommon genteel, which was a blue musling and a white jacket, with pink ribbins run thro' it, and my leghorn bonnet, as the ribbins was ironed out and looked quite new, as it did ought to for only fresh trimmed at the hend of last summer, and only on my 'ead twice, but 'ad got a good deal crushed thro' that hass of a cabman, a-lettin' the big box fall on it, and with my

white lace wail, as always looks like a lady; and sorry I am as I dressed like that, for I'd 'ave give the world for my coburg cloth and welwet cape afore we got 'ome from Wersales.

The way as they put you into them waitin' rooms, as is like pens at the railways, is werry aggrawatin', and parties kep' a-starin' at me, and some on 'em called me the belly Hanglaise, and some on 'em shoved uncommon rude when the doors was opened for to let us on to the platform; and when we'd got into the carriage Miss Tredwell says to me, "I wonder, Mrs. Brown, as you dresses that conspicuous, for everyone was a-starin' at you."

I says, "Me dress conspicuous! well, I like that, partikler from you," for she was a reg'lar guy, with one of them red Grabidaldi jackets on, and a yaller musling skirt, and a thing like a cheese-plate on the top of 'er 'ead, trimmed round with beads, for a 'at, and a lump of 'air stuck on at the back of 'er 'ead for a chignon, as she wanted to make believe was 'er own 'air, when, bless you, she ain't got six 'airs of a side growin' nat'ral, and I'm sure that thing looked like a hairy deformity a-growin' out the back of 'er 'ead, with a face as is as ugly as sin, in a pair of spectacles into the bargin, as of course she can't 'elp thro' not 'avin' made 'erself, as the sayin' is.

We was werry pleasant in the train all but for Miss Tredwell, as got a-talkin' to a minister as were Henglish, with a lot of boys with 'im, as was dressed up like a Catholic priest, leastways somethink like, as said he were a Catholic, as made a Irish party pitch into 'im, along with Miss Tredwell, one a one side and the other the other, till Brown says, "I'd advise you all to drop it and let the gentleman alone, and let 'im be what he likes."

"Yes," says the Irish party, "but he says he's a priest and he ain't."

Miss Tredwell, she says, "If he's a minister let 'im talk like one."

So I says to the Irish party, I says, "You didn't believe he was a priest, now did you?"

She says, "Not a bit on it."

"Well, then," I says, "you ain't 'urt;" and as to Miss Tredwell, she believes jest what she likes, whatever any minister may tell 'er, so it don't much signify what he talks about, for if she don't like it she can lump it, as the sayin' is.

So I says, "We're out for to spend a pleasant day, and not to interfere with one another's religions, as ain't nobody's affairs but our own."

So Miss Tredwell says, "He's a-livin' in the same 'ouse along with me, and a-goin' on with them boys jest like a papist, as quite puts me out."

I says, "You must be touchy for that to put you

out;" but I think as she was put out really, with 'er faceache as were that bad as she said as the train 'ad give 'er cold.

I says to 'er, "You'll escuse me, but," I says, "it's your teeth as wants a-lookin'."

"No," she says, "they don't," quite short; "my teeth's fust-rate."

I says, "Then they may be useful, but is not hornamental," thro' bein' a reg'lar set of cloves in 'er mouth.

"Well," she says, "you can't talk about teeth, as has only got one."

I says, "You'll escuse me, my back ones is sound, tho' only one left in front, thro' a clothes prop a-fallin' on 'em."

She only give a sneerin' smile like, and turns away 'er 'ead; but she got up the next mornin' with 'er face swelled up like a lump of dough.

There was a werry nice old French gentleman as spoke English in the carriage with us, thro' 'avin' of a English wife, as I couldn't cotton to at all, as the sayin' is, for she would keep a-runnin' down England and the English, as put me out.

Certingly, Wersales is a werry fine place, tho' dismal for to look at, and decided over-growed. They may well call it Wersales, for I never did taste sich a disgustin' glass of beer, as served me

right for 'avin' of it, for I'd been caught with their beer afore, as filth is the word.

I never did see sich miles of picters as there is at Wersales, and I says to Mrs. Archbutt, "It's all werry fine to paint them battles, but, in course, they wasn't never fought in this world."

So the old Frenchman as spoke English, he says, "Oh, yes, they are the victories of France all over the world."

"Yes," says 'is wife, a-chimin' in, "they've conquered every nation."

I says, "You'll escuse me, mum, but they've never conquered one."

She says, "Yes, every one, and will again."

I says, "Rubbish!" and walks on a-talkin' to Mrs. Archbutt, thro' not a-wantin' to 'ear 'er; but she would keep on at it, sayin', "France for ever!" till at last I says, "Oh," I says, "Waterloo!" for I was savage, not a-thinkin' as her French 'usband would 'ave 'eard me, thro', in course, not wishin' to 'urt their feelin's.

He flew out at me like ravin' tigers, a-sayin' as the English never did conquer at Waterloo. "No, no," he says, "no, it was a grand retreat; but the French was never beat."

"Oh," I says, "indeed; then 'ow about Sent 'Elener?"

The temper as that man showed, and 'is wife

too, as I couldn't stand it from 'er. I says, "Your 'usband may go on, thro' bein' a benighted foreigner; but as to you, I ain't no patience with you, as did ought to be ashamed on yourself, for if you like to marry a foreigner, do it in welcome, 'owever old, as I wishes 'im joy on you;" and I says, "I don't care for none of you, as is a mean-sperrited lot!" for all the English turned agin me. But I says, "Whatever you may say, Waterloo is Waterloo; and all as I've got to say is as we did beat 'em, and we'll do it agin if there's any occasions;" and off I was a-walkin' all of a 'urry, a-quite forgettin' about them boards bein' that slippy, and away goes my 'eels, and I felt I was a-fallin'; so I ketches 'old on the fust thing for to save myself by, as proved to be that old Frenchman's coat-tail, as gave way with a rip up the back, and down we goes together.

His wife, she says, "Let 'im go, you old wixen!" and in tryin' to lift 'im up, down she goes too, and there we was all three a-sprawlin', and the others a-larfin' that wiolent as they couldn't 'elp us up.

Two of them men as looks arter the rooms come up a-lookin' werry sour, and speakin' that gruff as didn't seem to see no joke in it, and I'm sure I didn't. So I says, "I'm shook dreadful, and it's a shame to polish 'em up like this, for whoever is to

walk on sich boards as is like lookin'-glass and ice for slippiness, and I do believe as you does it a-purpose."

Jest then Brown come back, and says, "Whatever are you a-settin' on the floor for?"

"Well," I says, "I should like to set 'ere a bit, for I'm that tired, and I can't keep my feet." So he ketched 'old on me, and give me a jerk up as pretty nigh knocked my bonnet off.

I says, "Let me ketch 'old of your harm, for walk I can't;" and what with 'im a-'oldin' me, and a-takin' werry short steps, I managed for more to totter than to walk thro' them rooms, as is a deal too long to please me; and Brown wasn't over-pleasant company, as give me a reg'lar jobation, thro' me a-tellin' 'im about my sayin' Waterloo.

So he says, "Don't you let me 'ear you jaggerin' no more about sich a subject, as you didn't never ought to mention afore the French; and you did ought, at your time of life, to 'ave more sense in your 'ead than illude to."

I says, "I didn't go to do it."

"Well, then," he says, "no more on it, if you please."

I was that tired with walkin' about that pallis, and glad I was for to go into the gardings and see the grand hose as they plays the water-works with,

and there I see the old Frenchman and 'is wife as glared at me.

Well, parties was a-rushin' all one side of them fountings, so I says to Mrs. Archbutt, "Let's come this way, as no one else ain't a-goin'," and jest then they took and turned on the water that strong, as the wind took, and it come slap over me and Mrs. Archbutt, and 'arf drowned us.

She was in a towerin' rage, and said as I'd done it for the purpose, as I'm sure I'd got quite as much on it as 'er, but she's been that cross-grained for ever so long, so she must get pleased agin, and off she walked a-mutterin', "Old fool."

We was a-goin' to dine at the Pally Royal. So I says, "We don't want only a bit of lunch," so I says to Miss Tredwell, as was walkin' alone thro' 'avin' 'ad words with every one, "What would you like?"

"Oh," she says, "somethink light, pastry like." So we goes into a pastrycook's shop on our way to the train as we was a-walkin' to slow along with another lady as 'ad jined us thro' bein' in the same 'ouse, and a-talkin' friendly.

We 'ad a few small cakes and a glass of the winergariest wine a-piece as ever I tasted, and if they didn't take and charge us 'arf-a-crown, leastways three francs, as is the same thing when you turns it into our money, as was a downright swindle,

and I wouldn't 'ave paid it, only I'd give the young girl a five-franc piece, so in course she collared the lot.

I couldn't make 'er understand much, but I kep' on a-sayin' "filloo," as I knows is French for thief, and walks out of the shop, as is a reg'lar set of 'orse leeches everywhere.

It's downright dreadful the price of everythink, and I'm sure if it wasn't as Mr. Cook manages wonderful for parties, nobody couldn't come to Paris at all, but things as Princes, and even the Prince of Wales 'isself 'ad to look to the money, and was drove to beer at the Exhibishun, as in course is a thing as he'd look down on in a gen'ral way as beneath 'im.

Wersales is a werry unpleasant pavement to walk on, and glad I was for to get to the train, where we met the others, and so got back to Paris in good time, as is a blessin', for I can't a-bear that shovin' and scrougin' for to get a train, as am always afraid of bein' pushed under the wheels, as would make short work of any one.

I must say as some of them picters about battles is werry grand, but you can see who does the work, for there was the kings and hemperors a-settin' quite easy on their 'osses, and them poor sojers a-bein' killed all round, and all I got to say, more fools them to go and fight over a thing as won't

bring them no good, but make widders and orphins, and you wouldn't ketch me a-fightin', not excep' any one was to come for to inwade us, and then I'd 'ave every man, woman, and child turn to, 'cos that's fightin' in self-defence; but to see them sojers a-rushin' on like wild beasts to kill their feller-cree-turs, is enough to turn anyone sick, and I wouldn't be in their boots as orders it to be done, not for a trifle.

Them French dinners waries a good deal, and I'm sure as some of them as is cheapest is best, and a werry nice dinner we got for two francs and a-'arf in the Pally Royal, as ain't dear when you comes to think, tho' in course the wine ain't no great shakes, and requires you to take a "petty ware" or two arter it, as we did out in the gardings, as is werry well, but it 'ad turned that chilly, I may say cold, and there was Miss Tredwell, as required all 'er warm shawl for 'erself, thro' a 'owlin' with tooth-ache. So I says to the lady as I'd made friends with, "This won't suit me, I shall get 'ome." So she says, "So shall I."

"Ah," I says, "I dare say your pa's expectin' you," for I'd see 'er about the place with a old man.

She says, "That's my 'usband."

I says, "Oh, indeed." I says, "Some parties does look holder than their hages;" for I didn't know what to say, and felt as I'd put my foot in it.

So we left the rest on 'em, as said they was a-goin' somewheres; and off me and the lady goes to ketch the 'buss by what they calls the Bourse, and 'ad to wait there some time, thro' there bein' so many a-goin'. At last we was off, but not afore the rain begun; and as to the cold, I was downright perishin'; and them 'bussmen is that contrairy for if he didn't take us ever so far wrong, and we 'ad to walk 'ome at least a mile in torrents of rain, and all as I was fit for was bed, arter a cup of 'ot tea, as was the only thing as I'd relished all day.

Brown he come in werry late, and said as they'd all been for to see 'orsemanship, at a surk, as they calls it.

"Well," I says, "you're welcome to go for me, as don't care about them things." But he says as it were wonderful. We was fast asleep as churches, as the sayin' is, and I was a-dreamin' of fightin' with that old Frenchman about Waterloo, and thought I was 'ammerin' away at 'is 'ead, as sounded 'oller; but when I was woke up, there was somebody a-'ammerin' somewheres, so I listens attentive, but didn't care for to get out of bed; and as to Brown, when I told 'im about it, he only says, "Let 'em 'ammer, as ain't at our door," and goes off.

But in the mornin' we 'eard the reason as they was a-'ammerin', for if Mrs. Archbutt 'adn't been and took the key of Miss Tredwell's door into 'er

room, so she couldn't get in, and Miss Tredwell 'ad to set up in the Sally Mangy all night; and a pretty rage she were in, for she declared as Mrs. Archbutt 'ad done it for the purpose, thro' their 'avin' quarrelled at the surk, as made Mrs. Archbutt leave fust; and when she got 'ome, went and collared Miss Tredwell's key, and pretended she didn't 'ear a sound all night, as must be as deaf as 'er 'usband. But I must say as it served Miss Tredwell right, for she'd a werry nice room next ourn as she would move out on, because she didn't like bein' so 'igh up, as she said it didn't sound well; a stuck-up hidjot, and a nice swelled face she'd got, as wasn't no improvement to her, and couldn't go to the Louver the next day, as she'd promised to, a-sayin' as she'd been, and could show 'em everythink worth seein', as is 'er blowin' ways; but she 'ad to take to 'er bed, and was glad for me to ferment 'er face with poppy-'eads, as give 'er ease; but I must say, of all the disagreeables as ever I did see, she's the worst, out and out. Sich a sour, discontented temper, and that conceited, as you'd think 'er a downright beauty, instead of a fright.

I didn't mean for to go to the Louver myself no more, but they all says to me, "Oh do come, Mrs. Brown, 'cos you've been afore, and can tell us all about it."

"Well," I says, "I ain't no objections, tho' it

would take wollums." So go we did, a party. As is certingly a noble place, and some of them picters is werry well, tho' I've 'eard say as they was stole, a good many on 'em, out of other countries, by old Boney, and a good many had to be give back.

What I likes best at the Louver is them royal robes as is a-'angin' up in glass cases; and there's a little shoe as belonged to that poor dear queen, with 'er 'ead cut off; and there's everythink as Bony-party did used to wear, down to 'is tooth-brush; all except what Madame Tusso 'ave got in Baker Street Bazaar, as is the best, for there's the carriage as he tried for to get away in, and the bed as he died in; and 'owever they can let 'im lay there in that state, as even the Duke of Wellin'ton 'isself went to look at 'im, as they'd better put in 'is tomb, as they've got all ready in the Invalids, as we're a-goin' to see, and no doubt a wonderful man, but why ever couldn't he stop at 'ome like this one, and set to work for rebuild the place, as must have wanted it in them days, as I've 'eard say they 'adn't a drop of water in the 'ouse, as wants many improvements still, tho' werry nice to look at outside, and certingly werry pretty, and all done up gay; and as to the furnishin', it looks that elegant lit up of a night, as is like fairy-land. But give me what's plain and wholesome afore all your finery, as is only gimcrack arter all. And the floors at that Louver

was as bad as Wersales for bein' slippery, and p'raps it's done for the purpose, for to prevent any one a-hookin' of it too sudden, as might be a-carryin' somethink off, and wouldn't never get far; leastways, I shouldn't, for I was a-slippin' about all the time, and wouldn't 'ave minded if I'd 'ad my umbreller, as is always a support, and done no 'arm to nothink, for I'm sure I shouldn't never 'ave took it off the ground.

But as I were a-sayin' about that Louver, it's a noble place, and done up all beautiful for to show to them kings and hemperors as is a-comin' on a wisit, one down and the other come on, as the sayin' is, 'cos, in course it wouldn't do for to 'ave a lot of 'em all together at a time as would lead to words, a-talkin' over their kingdoms, as they're all a-tryin' to do one another out on, and 'im as is the strongest will in course get his way, certingly this 'ere hempire 'ave a wonderful harmy of 'is hown. I don't know 'ow many millions, but the place reg'lar swarms with sojers, as is all to show off among them other kings, as no doubt makes them feel wild.

But the way as they gets the sojers is downright 'art breakin', as Mr. Ditcher was a-tellin' me they makes every one serve, a-tearin' on them away from their 'omes, like as they did a young man as he know'd as 'ad a aged mother for to support on a

sitivation of about eighty pounds a-year, as kep' 'em both respectable, and 'er one as 'ad seen better days, when he was drawed and 'ad to serve, and 'is place kep' open for 'im for a 'ole year, as he come back to quite pleased, but ketch 'em a-lettin' 'im go, and called 'im back for 'is four years as he 'ad to serve, and lost 'is place in course, and the poor old lady broke 'er 'art and died, and was of course a burden off 'is back, but he never settled down to no good, and was p'raps drove to the Morg in the end like a-many more.

I was that wild when I found as I might 'ave took my umbreller to the Louver, as would 'ave been a comfort there and come in useful, for as we was a-comin' out of it, it was a-rainin' 'ard, and should 'ave brought it all but for a party where we was a-stoppin', as is one of them as must put 'er oar in, as the sayin' is, and she says umbrellers ain't allowed in there, and so said every one, so I left mine. I must say as they do keep up them pallises beautiful night and day, as makes Buckingham Pallis look a dingy 'ole, and the gas a-burnin' beautiful and bright, as is quite a disgrace to us as inwented it; but I 'eard parties sayin' as they'd walked over us everywhere at the Exhibishun, and even cut us out with our own knives, as we did used to beat 'em at 'oller.

I says to Brown, "I don't think as I shall do that

'ere Exposishun much more, so should like a good day at it."

"Well," he says, "we'll start early to-morrer and finish it up."

I says, "I'm agreeable." So we was up with the lark, as the sayin' is, and went over to breakfast, and when we got into the Sally Mangy if all the chairs wasn't put with their faces down like agin the table, so the waiter he said as it were parties as 'ad come down 'arf dressed and done it for to secure the places; but the lady of the 'ouse she come in and see it and up and spoke like a lady, a-sayin' as it were not fair and she wouldn't 'ave it, and says to me, "Mrs. Brown, mum, pray take your place."

I says, "Oh this 'ere little side table will do werry well for us" as was in the winder; so down we set, and Mrs. Archbutt she come in jest then a-sayin' as Archbutt was that bad as he couldn't get up, so us three jest filled the table as the waiter brought us werry nice tea and 'ot rolls, leastways new, and 'am and heggs, as was fresh laid, and plenty of delicious butter as I quite enjoyed. Well, other parties come in and took their places at the other table, and jest then down come them parties as 'ad thought to 'ave 'em by turnin' down the chairs, and one party as was that one as was always interferin' and told me not to take my umbreller to the Louver.

She was one as know'd 'er way about, and she says to the waiter, as was a werry civil party, "That table was secured for me," a-pintin' to where we was a-settin'. He told 'er as fust come fust served was the rule. So she says, "Any one as 'ad the feelin's of a lady wouldn't 'ave took a table as was engaged."

I says, "Pray who are you to engage a table?" I says, "P'raps you'd like to 'ave the best of everythink, and fust turn."

She says, "That's my table, and if you was a lady you'd give it up."

I says, "If I was a fool, you mean, but," I says, "there ain't nothink green about me." Well, I do think as words would 'ave run 'igh, only some 'ad done breakfast and got up, and that flaunty thing set down and began a-finding fault with everythink. So I says to Mrs. Archbutt, "It's my opinion as them as lives in the cookshop line at 'ome gives theirselves the most hairs when out."

Oh, she did fly out, that party, and said as I was a gross insultin' of 'er, and she wouldn't set in the room with me; but she was too wide awake not to go on with 'er breakfast, and kep' a-glarin' at me with 'er mouth full of roll and 'am, as I didn't care about; but found arter as I'd 'it 'er 'ard thro' 'er bein' in the 'am and beef line, as, in course, I were unawares of, or I'd never 'ave illuded to the

subjec', as, of course, was a 'omethrust, as the sayin' is.

They tells me as that Exposishun is arranged in horder, but I'm blessed if I could make 'ead or tail on it, for I kep' a-wanderin' on, and seein' the same things over and over agin. Brown, he was that dead nuts on the machinery, as is, no doubt, werry wonderful, but don't suit me; so I agreed for to meet 'im at Spiers and Pond's, and me, and Mrs. Archbutt, and another lady, the same as we'd met at Wersales, went one way, and Brown another. As to Miss Tredwell, she was in that rage over 'er key as she wouldn't speak to nobody, and went back to 'er aunt and uncle; and when we met 'er in the Exposishun, only bowed distant and 'aughty in passin', as I'm sure didn't 'urt my feelin's.

Mrs. Archbutt, she was quite cheerful and 'appy all thro' bein' without 'er 'usband, as certingly is a aggrawatin' old hass. She kep' a-sayin', "Oh, come here!" and, "Oh, do look there!" till I says to 'er, "I ain't a-goin' bustin' about like this."

"Oh," she says, "I wants to see everythink."

"Well," I says, "you're old enough for to take care of yourself, and can meet us by and by." So off she walks, and me and that other lady in the name of Wilby was left alone, and was a-lookin' at them jewels; and I was a-speakin' about

anyone a-marryin' for them things without no affection, and I see 'er eyes full of tears.

"Ah!" she says, "many does it."

I says, "I've no patience with them, as 'ad better go to service."

She says, "You're right;" and then I remembered about 'er 'usband bein' that elderly, so I changes the subjec' sudden, thro' a-remarkin' as I'd 'eard say as there was kings and queens a-walkin' about jest for all the world like common people, and certingly if there was kings and queens they was common-lookin' enough, though I see a many a-givin' of theirselves hairs all hover the place.

I was a-walkin' about, and we come to one place where there was a many lookin' in; so I says, "What is it?"

"Oh," they says, "only some Turks a-makin' real coffee."

"Well," I says, "I never know'd as Turks made coffee, as I always thought grow'd."

"Oh," says a party, "they're a-makin' the real thing, as is well worth tastin'."

So Mrs. Wilby said, as 'er ead were that bad, as p'raps a cup of good strong coffee would do it good.

"Well," I says, "I've 'eard say that it is a fine thing for the 'ead."

So in we goes, and them Turks as was called Tunics, illudin', no doubt, to their 'abits, was very perlite, and brought us the coffee in a little cup, as I took a gulp at; and of all the beastliness as I got in my mouth, as were nothin' but 'ot water and coffee-grounds, as swaller I couldn't, so spit all over the place, as p'raps were not manners; but I'll teach them Tunics not to play no more of their games on me, as ain't one to stand no sich larks.

I see their eyes a-glowin' at me, as, no doubt, would 'ave liked to 'ave 'am-strung me on the spot, as they do their own wives, the willins, a-darin' for to tie a 'onest woman up in a sack, and drownd her. I should like for to see 'em try to get me into a sack, as I think they'd 'ave their work cut out.

I don't know what they charged for that beastliness of coffee, for Mrs. Wilby took and paid for it, and says, "Never mind."

She was that broken sperrit, as didn't seem for to mind nothink.

I ain't no doubt as all them buildin's as is about the Exposishun will be werry fine when finished, but they seems all in confusion now, and higgledy-piggledy, as the sayin' is, and Rooshuns and Prooshuns and them Germans, along with the Grecians and Swedes, as I did always used to think

meant turnips, thro' 'avin' 'eard Mr. Simpson, as was a large cow-keeper, speak on 'em often, but turned out 'uman bein's; and then there was them Denmarks, along with the Dutch, let alone Turks and infidels of all sorts, as put you in mind of Noah's Ark, as contained beasts of all sorts, and if it 'adn't been for lots of perlice all over the place, no doubt would 'ave been a-tearin' one another to bits like wild beasts, but certingly a wonderful sight, tho' too noisy for me, and glad I was when we got to Spiers and Pond's for a drop of beer, as cooled the mouth, and that perlite to me as you'd think I'd been a queen, as they says as they know'd me as well as Queen Wictoria, as they ain't sure is a-comin', but if she should will be on the quiet like me, as prefers it; for tho' she is a-cheerin' up a bit, poor dear, yet in course must feel to 'er life's end, as is becomin' in any woman, partikler when left comfortable and a grow'd up family.

The weather kep' a-changin' from cold to 'ot and 'ot to cold all the time as we was in Paris, for I was perished in my musling at Wersales, and werry nigh suffocated a-goin' out in my coburg cloth in a chary-bang, as they calls it, when we went a party for to see San Denney, as is a fine church, where they did used for to bury the kings and queens; and if them low-lived wagabones of a mob didn't go out in a Resolution and took and

pulled the werry dead out of their coffins and made a bonfire on them, and I'd put a few on the top on themselves, jest to see 'ow they liked it; and I do think as we'd seed nearly everythink as is worth seein', and all thro' them parties as took us about in them chary-bangs, as is werry convenient, thro' no dust a-flyin' along of the 'eavy rains as 'ad reg'larly deluged the roads, and made it werry unpleasant for me a-steppin' suddin off the kerb-stone and missed my foot, and down I come on all fours and got up a reg'lar mask of mud, as it's lucky was only sand, and didn't 'urt myself, tho' it didn't make my coburg look any the better, and was obligated to throw my gloves away, and shook my front off as fell over my eyes, and Mrs. Archbutt never told me on till it dropped, as is a nasty-tempered woman, and I don't know as ever I wishes to see any on 'em agin, tho' I must say I took to Mrs. Wilby, as made 'erself werry agreeable of a evenin' where we was a-stoppin', a-playin' the pianner, as was worth listenin' to, thro' 'avin' been a governess, tho' I'm sure for to 'ear some was downright strummin'; and as to Miss Tredwell a-singin' "Hever of Thee," I thought I should 'ave bust myself a-keepin' under my larfture, as will 'ave a went, and made Brown that savage with me; and all as I've got to say is as I'd go all over the world with Mr. Cook myself, and Brown says the same,

as I'm sure they're ain't nothin' left undone by for to satisfy parties, and I felt like a friend to, and 'is good lady, as I 'opes we may meet agin and 'ave many a pleasant chat, as is always a pleasure, partikler when you agrees, as it isn't always as you can, for some parties is that contrairy as not a hangel couldn't get on with, and sich didn't ought to come out on escursions, as all depends on parties bein' that friendly.

We was all a-goin' to San Cloo, as they calls it, as is their foolish ways of talkin', for it's spelt Saint Cloud as is downright plain English; if they'd only speak plain and not mess all their words up that fast, there's no doubt as a-many would understand 'em quite well, for the words isn't so out of the way if they was spoke proper, tho' I must say as it's werry absurd on 'em to call that 'ere church the Muddy Lane, for tho' arter a 'eavy shower the streets is filthy, yet certingly no one could say as it's a lane; but then it ain't more ridiculous than our callin' the big theayter in London Dreary Lane, tho' the time as I see it dreary were the word, but then it's all along of the French bein' one time so much about the place, as I've 'eard say as some of our kings was more French than English. But as to they're a-callin' the long street with the arches the river Lee, it's downright foolishness, unless perhaps there was a river run thro' it once, as I've 'eard say

did used to be in London just close by where Fleet Street stands now, and must 'ave been a big river too, for to let the fleet come up it. But what I were a-goin' to say about San Cloo was the way as one of them parties went on a-goin' in the chary-bang, as 'olds a good many, and we was all a-startin' and there was three werry nice young ladies as wanted to go partikler, but when it come up to the door where they was a-waitin' for to be took up there wasn't no room. I was a-settin' atween two werry stout gentlemen, and was a-chattin' pleasant, when that party as 'ad the words with me about the table at breakfast, as was a-settin' behind back to back with me, all black satin and crinoline, with ringlets that greasy as they looked quite drippin'. When I see them young people that disappinted at not goin', I says, "What a pity as we can't make room for 'em," and I hears that party behind my back a-sayin',

"It's a pity as some on us ain't a little smaller."

So I says, "If some on us didn't spread their-selves out as far as they can there'd be more room."

So she says, "Some on us is pretty well spread out by nature."

So I says, "If some on us wasn't to wear crinolines, as is out of fashion, there'd be a place for a little one or two." We was just off and I

'eard that creetur call me a old 'og in armour, so I says, "I don't know about bein' a 'og, as isn't company as I'm used to, but should say as you was quite at 'ome among."

She says, "You wulgar old woman, don't talk to your betters."

I says, "I won't when I meets with them as won't be the like of you as is what I calls cat's meat."

She says, "I won't go along with that old woman."

I says, "That you won't, for I'm a-goin' to get out, and wouldn't be seen with you," for I didn't feel over well, and there was to be a party for San Cloo in a day or two as I'd rather go with, so out I gets, and some'ow or other my parysol 'ad ketched in that female's bonnet, and in me a-gettin' up quick I tore it all back off 'er 'ead, and if them ringlets wasn't false. She give a squall and shoved at me that wiolent as pitched me nearly out of the chary-bang, so I turned round and give 'er a good topper and then bundles out, she come out arter me like a wild cat, and showed 'er legs a-gettin' down as was mill-posts for thickness, and cotton-top silk stockin's.

I do believe if several of the gentlemen 'adn't stood atween us, we should 'ave come to blows reg'lar, not as I should 'ave let myself down for

to fight, but really, she did aggrawate me; so she 'ad to go in to set 'er bonnet to rights, and I felt my spavins a-comin' on that dreadful, that I 'urried into the 'ouse, and 'ad a good cry with a little somethink 'ot, and then felt better, tho' far from well all day, and was glad as them young ladies went, as come 'ome in the hevenin', and made theirselves that pleasant a-singin' and playin', and thro' the weather bein' that warm, we set out in the garding a-listenin'; and as to that party in the black satin, she over-'eated herself or somethink, for she was obligated to go to bed as soon as ever she got 'ome, as 'ad been ill all the way in the chary-bang; but I wouldn't 'ave no disagreeables, so the next time as I see 'er, I goes up to 'er and says, "I asks your pardon, mum, for anythink as I said rude yesterday; and as to your bonnet, I do assure you it was a accident, as I wouldn't 'ave done it for the world, a-knowin' what it is thro' 'avin' took to a front myself." "Oh," she says, "never mind, tho' I did feel 'urt at the time, Mr. Johnson bein' present, and only lost my 'air three months ago thro' a bilious fever," as was all rubbish, for she was five-and-forty if a 'our; and as to Mr. Johnson, as was a great big hulkin' lookin' chap not thirty, as 'ad a nasty 'abit of larfin' without a emptin' of 'is mouth fust; I'm sure he'd never think of 'er, tho' she's a-settin' of 'er cap dead at 'im, as the sayin' is, but arter that, we got on better,

me and that party for that bit of a breeze between us seemed like a thunderstorm for to clear the hair. I was a-goin' to bed afore Brown that werry night, and thought while I was a-undressin', as I 'eard a sobbin' like, so I listens, and sure enough it was some one a-sobbin' in Mrs. Wilby's room, so I puts my shawl round my shoulders, and goes to the door and knocks and says, "Mrs. Wilby, mum, are you not well."

"Oh," she says, "Mrs. Brown, is that you? I'm so thankful you've come."

I see 'er lookin' like a ghost for whiteness, so I says, "Whatever is the matter?"

"Oh," she says, "I'm a 'art-broken wretched woman."

I says, "What is it?"

So she says, "It's all my own fault."

I says, "Can I help you?"

"No," she says, "you can't, nor no one else. I'm rightly punished."

I says, "What for?"

"Oh," she says, "I married that old man for 'is money, thro' bein' in dreadful distress, and now he leads me such a life, and ill-uses me thro' jealousy."

I says, "The toothless old brute."

She says, "He's 'orridly mean, and I do assure you he'll 'ardly let me 'ave a meal, except what I

get here, and because I met a old friend to-day in the Exhibishun as I stopped to speak to, he dragged me 'ome 'ere, and has gone to 'ave 'is tea;" and she says, "my brother is in Paris, and is coming to see me this evenin', but I dursn't let 'im know."

I says, "Not let you see your own brother; I never 'eard tell of sich a old Bluebeard."

While we was a-talkin,' there come a tap at the door, as was her brother as looked like a seafarin' character, as proved to be, and only jest come 'ome.

I went out of the room in course, and thinks as I'd go over and stop that old Wilby from comin'. So I slips on my gownd, and tho' far from well, goes over to where they was a-takin' tea, and there was that old wagabone still at 'is tea, a-tuckin' into cold 'am like one o'clock. So I jest took a cup and set down near 'im, and begun a-talkin' to 'im, a lyin' old beast, as begun a humbuggin' about 'is dear wife bein' that delicate as she was forced to go to bed. I didn't say nothink, but when he'd took 'is tea, and said as he was a-goin', I says, "Law, won't you 'ave a 'and at cribbage with me, Mr. Wilby?" For we'd played one evenin' afore, and he'd won sixpence on me, as I see he were reg'lar greedy arter.

At first he sed he wouldn't, but then give way,

and we set down to play, and he kep' on a-chucklin' over me a-losin'.

Afore ever I come in, I asked the lady of the 'ouse if she'd send some tea over to that poor young woman, as promised she'd do it as soon as possible.

I kep' lettin' that old feller win till he'd got a shillin' out of me, and then he wanted to leave off. But I says, "No, give me a chance of winnin' some of it back," as he was obligated to give in to, thro' others a-sayin' it were fair.

Brown, he come into the room, as 'ad been doin' a pipe, and says, "Hallo, Martha, I thought you'd gone to bed."

I says, "I changed my mind."

Jest then the waiter come in and says to me, "The lady ain't there, for I've took over the tea myself, and the room's empty."

Says old Wilby, "What lady?"

I says, "Oh, nobody you knows; a friend of mine."

So the waiter says, "Then you didn't mean the tea for this gentleman's wife?"

Up jumps old Wilby and rushes out of the room; I follers 'im, and got up to the room as quick as he did, and sure enough it was dark and empty.

He turns on me and says, "This is your 'andy work, you old cockatrice."

I says, "You call me sich names, and I'll tear your eyes out."

He says, "Where's my wife?" and rushes into my room.

I says, "Come out of there, and don't make a fool of yourself." I'd got a light, and on the table there was a letter for 'im, as he ketched up and read, and then says, "It's all a plot, and you're in it."

I says, "I knows nothink about it;" but I says, "I do know one thing, and that is, as you treated 'er shameful; and if she's gone to her brother, it only serves you right."

He says, "'Er brother, indeed!"

I says, "You don't mean to say as that seafarin' party as I left 'er here along with isn't 'er brother?"

He says, "You must be a fool to believe sich a tale," and was a-rushin' out.

"Now," I says, "you'll escuse me, but," I says, "don't you go and make yourself a larfin' stock to every one in the 'ouse, but keep quiet; if she's a bad woman, let 'er go, and you're well rid of 'er, and be sure it'll come 'ome to 'er."

He begun a-cussin' of 'er, so I says, "Don't do that, for, remember as cusses is like chickens, they comes 'ome to roost;" so I says, "let 'er go, and you take yourself off on the quiet."

"Well," he says, "you're no fool, tho' nobody wouldn't believe it was in you to look at you."

I says, "Don't the letter say where's she's gone?"

"Oh," he says, "I don't care, leave me alone, that's all," and so I did, and when Brown come over I told 'im, and he says, "I do believe as you'll be a-goin' into the Toolerees and a-interferin' with the Hempire 'isself next."

"Ah," says I, "I could tell 'im a bit of my mind as would do 'im good, and I'm sure I could manage that poor little Prince Imperial better, as I see lookin' werry pasty a-walkin' in the gardings, as wants feedin' up and not to be allowed for to set about a-drinkin' wine with a lot of little boys as is dressed up like sojers, and his father a-lookin' on as I see the picter on myself.

We 'eard old Wilby a-fidgetin' about a good deal, and I kep' a-dreamin' and a-thinkin' about that poor young woman, and didn't get no sleep, but jest as I was dropped off if they didn't come and thump at the door and say as it was time for me to get up as it 'ad gone five.

I says, "Get up at this 'our; what for?"

The man says, "You're a-goin' by the fust train."

I says, "I ain't."

"Oh," he says, "then it's the next room," as sure enough it was old Wilby a-goin' off, and go he did, and good riddance; and, I says to Brown,

"he must 'ave done werry bad by 'er for to make 'er run away like that."

"Oh," he says, "she's only a-actin' ally mode de Parry, and has caught up their ways."

I says, "Rubbish, there's good and bad, no doubt, 'ere like everywhere's else;" but I couldn't go to sleep no more, and lay there a-thinkin' over all manner, and what I 'eard about their French ways of puttin' all the children out to nuss, as dies by the thousand, and is a bad way for to go on jest to save theirselves the trouble; but, law, it don't do for to think over the way as children is treated in England, as is bad enough, goodness knows.

Brown, he got up in a reg'lar bad temper, that short, as there weren't no speakin' to 'im, and was that rude to me over breakfast thro' a-sidin' agin me when I said as I'd see Bonyparty a-layin' in state in Baker Street, 'cos parties said they was a-goin' to see 'is tomb, as I've seen myself, but wanted for to go into Paris to do a little bit of shoppin' with Mrs. Ditcher, as I knows is as good as French to go shoppin' with, and wouldn't 'ave thought of goin' alone, for no sooner do they find out as you're English, than they sticks it on pretty thick, I can tell you, everywhere about Paris, downright barefaced robbery; but I must say as I do think as I never did know sich a reg'lar swindle as one of them dinners as we took in the Pally Royal,

as was two francs seventy-five, as they tells us means three francs; and they'd been and put on a lot for to ketch the English, as they know'd would be that ravenous as they'd be drove to eat anythink and pay thro' their noses into the bargin.

Well, we was a pretty large party, and Miss Tredwell were there, as 'ad got sick of 'er aunt at Wersales and come back, and she kep' on a-talkin' what she calls French, as is in my opinion, nothink but gibberish; well, one says as they'd like one thing, and one another; as for me, the only thing as I took extra were a bit of butter and a reddish or two, and couldn't rink their wine, and 'ad a bottle of pale ale, and bless you, the money as that dinner come to was turtle and wenison, as the sayin' is.

So I says it's downright robbery, and quite as bad as at the Caffee Shanton, as they charged us a franc and a-'arf at, for a cup of the most awful coffee as ever I did taste, wuss than the Tunics.

We couldn't make the waiter understand, and I don't know what we should have done, if it 'adn't been as a werry pleasant gentleman as were English, and a beard, a-takin' of his dinner, come and 'elped us, and esplained as we'd been an 'ad a lot of things supplementaire, as they calls 'em, as means extras; but he made 'em take a-somethink off, but it was over four francs a-piece, as is a 'eavy price for the

Pally Royal, and only what they charges anywhere for a dinner of Paris, as we 'ad one day for a treat, as is certingly good as French dinners goes, as I don't think much on myself, and prefers a jint and a puddin' any day.

I didn't go but to one theayter, as was to see Cindrella, as wasn't a bit like the English story, tho' you could see as that it were cribbed from it, and of all the sights as ever I did see, it was them gals dresses as danced, as wasn't no dresses at all.

We was up werry 'igh, and the 'eat were that dreadful, though a noble theayter, and that full as you wouldn't believe as so many people could come to see sich foolishness, as I didn't understand, and only come 'cos Mr. Ditcher said as we did ought to see fine spectacles, as is what the French calls plays, as is their ignorance, and Miss Tredwell did make me that wild, for she kep' on a-larfin' as if she could understand the jokes, and when you asked her what they'd said, she only told you foolishness as nobody couldn't larf at, as wasn't a maniac outright, and I see as she didn't know no more than me what they was a-sayin', as is a mask of deceit all over. The next day we went to San Cloo, and I should 'ave looked werry nice only I'd sent my white jacket to the wash, and the colour as they sent it 'ome was outrageous, as they'd been and washed it in dirty water and

then blue bagged it to death—leastways that's what it looked like; and as to Brown's shirts and collars they come that limp as there wasn't no wear in 'em, and no wonder, for they washes in cold water down by the river side, as I see them myself a-beatin' of the things to death, as is shameful;—and sich a price as is enough to make any one stare.

But certingly we 'ad a werry pleasant day at San Cloo, as is a pretty place, and if I was a queen would jest suit me, as the waterworks plays beautiful and not too far to go, and well it wasn't, for tho' a lovely mornin', come over a storm in the evenin' as made Mrs. Wells faint dead off, jest as we got in the train, for we couldn't go 'ome in the chary-bang; and Miss Tredwell kept a-'ollerin' to be put in a cellar so as she couldn't see it, as is downright foolishness, as might find 'er out jest the same there as in the hopen day, and I says to her, "There ain't no cellars to be 'ad in a railway train," where we was then, as didn't pacify her, but turned out a fine night jest arter we got 'ome. I never shall forget the fright as I got one mornin' as I was out early a-takin' a walk near the Bore de Boulone. I'm always pretty sharp a-lookin' out for the 'orses as come a-gallopin' along the footpath, downright disgraceful. Well, I was a-walkin' on and 'eard a flappin' noise behind me, and a party as were a-

scrapin' the road close by 'ollers out to me. I looks round, and there was them two beastly blacks a-trottin' after me on their camels, as 'ad broke loose from the Exposishun. The path where I was walkin' 'ad a post each side, with a wooden bar at the top, as I couldn't get under, and as to lettin' them beasts pass they was all over the place like, so there wasn't nothink for it but to run, and off I set and 'eard a-shoutin' as was no doubt some one a-'ollerin' to me as the camels was comin', and on I rushed and made for the first opening as I see in them palin's as was ever so far off, but I bounds through it and come full butt agin a old feller as were a-smokin' a pipe and sent 'im a-flyin' agin some iron railin's, as it's a mercy he stopped me a-comin' agin or I should 'ave been reg'lar doubled up—he certingly did go on tremenjous, a-making signs as I'd 'urt his feet. But as I says, what is any one to do when wild beasts is a-pursuin' 'em, and as is a shame to be let out like that with them savages on their backs as don't seem to 'ave no power over them, as 'ow should they 'ave as is as strong as helephants, tho' no trunk to carry.

I must say as I do like for to see them places in Paris where they looks arter the children, down to quite infants, while their mothers is gone to work, as they calls a Craysh, and a werry good

thing too, tho' I must say as I wish as every mother with a young child was able for to give 'er time to look arter it; but them good sisters is that kind as they'd do anythink for any one, and I'm sure the way as they looks arter the cripples, and tries to teach all the children as did ought to turn out well, and p'raps they will be better than them as 'ave gone before, as 'adn't them instructions.

Talk about French dinners! law, they're nothink; for if you wants to pay, go to some of them English places, leastways one as me and Brown and Miss Tredwell went to the last day as we was in Paris; for we was a-goin' 'ome by the night train, thro' its a-suitin' Brown best, as 'ad to be 'ome by a certain day.

So I says, "The train leaves at six o'clock, and we'll get a bit of dinner about four o'clock;" and I says, "the sea is a bilious thing, and don't let's 'ave none of their French grease for to upset us."

So Brown says, "What will you 'ave?"

So I says, "I've 'eard speak of a place close on the Bully-wards, where you can get a bit of cold beef and a drop of beer, English-like."

Well, Brown says, "All right." So when we'd been about and bought some trifles as I wanted for to take 'ome, I was that tired as I says it must be near dinner time, and off we goes to this 'ere place,

as is certingly werry nice to look at. Well, all as we 'ad was a bit of cold meat and a steak, with some sparrer-grass, and a few strawberries about the size of peas, as is wonderful cheap. Miss Tredwell she fancied a drop of wine more than beer, but we only 'ad hordinare as was good, and took 'arf a bottle a-piece, with some bread and butter; and I'm blest if the bill didn't come up to pretty near a pound.

I says, "Whatever for?" But they couldn't speak no English; leastways a waiter pretended to as was a insolent beast, and quite rude to me because I asked 'im to 'urry with the steak, as they kep' us waitin' ever so long for, and if he didn't say in 'is gibberish as it wasn't time for dinners, and would 'ave been insultin', only 'is English didn't run to it, as the sayin' is, and he was stuck up a-tryin' to get 'is sauce out.

There wasn't nothink for it but to pay. So we did, and Brown blowed me up, a-sayin' we could 'ave 'ad a fust-rate dinner for 'arf the money, and so we could.

I was glad for to get to the railway, where we'd left our things in the mornin', and we was soon in the train, and a lovely evenin' it were, all but the dust, as was a-makin' quite millers on us. We didn't stop werry long at Ruin, but time to take a somethink as knows 'ow to charge, and

wanted 'arf a franc for a orange, and a whole franc for about a dozen strawberries. When we got to Dieppe we got aboard of the steamer as wasn't to start not till four in the mornin'. So I goes down into the cabin, and the stewardess was a werry pleasant young woman, and made me up a sort of a bed on a sofy as I should 'ave slep' on werry well, only just as I were a-goin' to lay down up comes a stout party as said she'd engaged that sofy. So I says, "Werry well, then I'll sleep up there," as was a sort of a shelf just over that sofy, as 'ad a little round winder open close to my 'ead.

Well, I managed for to get up there, and shets the winder; so the party on the sofy says, "Oh, I can't 'ave that winder shet."

So I says, "Can't you? Then I can, as ain't a-goin' to 'ave my death of cold ketched thro' the night air a-blowin' in."

"Oh," she says, "sea air will do you good."

I says, "If you're so fond on it, p'raps you'll come up and lay 'ere with your 'ead close agin it, as will give you ear-ache as sure as a gun."

She said as she should faint.

"Well," I says, "faint away; they're used to it 'ere."

So I shets the winder, and tries to go to sleep, and 'ad dozed off, when I suppose I was a-dreamin', for I thought as that party below was a-tryin' to

open that little winder, and I says, "No, you don't; get away," and gives 'er a shove, as I thought, as made me roll right off the shelf, and come on the top of 'er with a squash as made every one wake up.

There was a row, but I'm sure I was most 'urt, for I rolled off of 'er on to the floor. I thought I was a-settin' on somethink werry soft and 'ard both together, and felt some one a-'ittin' at me, but didn't know quite what I was about, thro' bein' that confused in my 'ead, atween asleep and awake, with a bell a-ringin', and the stewardess a-'ollerin' at me and tryin' to pull me up, and if I wasn't a-settin' on a lady's face, as were a-sleepin' on the ground; for the cabin was that crowded, because all as comes by night is allowed in the best cabin without payin' extra, as Brown and me 'ad done a-comin', and really, when I did get on my feet, I felt reg'lar like busted, and jest then the boat was off, and joggled about so as I couldn't stand, and I didn't know where to lay, for the place was that full, and the wessel a-rollin' and pitchin', for it 'ad come on to blow and rain that wiolent as I couldn't go on deck, where Brown was; but at last I couldn't stand it no longer, for that stout party as I'd fell on kep' a-moanin', and the lady as I'd set on 'er face 'er nose were a-bleedin', and altogether I never did feel more wretched.

So up I goes, and a young feller were that kind

to me, and acted quite the father to me, and wrapped me up in a thing like a coal-sack, and there I set on the deck a-rollin' about that dreadful, with a 'ankercher tied round my 'ead, that ill as I do think as death would 'ave been a mercy; and I can't make out 'owever it is as them wessels is allowed for to roll and pitch about like that, as can't be fastened proper, as I says to that young man as 'ad give me the coal-sack to wear, "Whatever can be the use of all them cords and ropes if they don't 'old it steadier than this;" as only says, "Law bless you, marm, this ain't nothink but 'er play, as is a light-'arted wessel."

When I see Brown, I says, "Brown, it's all over with me! But," I says, "if anythink should 'appen to me, whatever you do, don't go for to pitch me overboard, for," I says, "I've got a secret on my bussum as I wouldn't die without tellin' you on, was it ever so."

"Oh," he says, "I don't want to know none of your secrets as ain't worth knowin', I dessay."

I says, "Brown, it is worth knowin', for," I says, "it's a five-pound note as I've got sowed up in my stays," so he only bust out a-larfin' and says—

"Oh, I shan't mind a-losin' that if I gets rid of you."

He ain't a bad 'art ain't Brown, but not much feelin' as ever he shows for nothink, and if he didn't

go away and leave me, as is a nice way for to keep 'is wows as he made, never to desert me in sickness and in 'ealth, as I'm sure I was in both just then. As to Miss Tredwell, I'd left 'er awful bad, but about eight o'clock or so she came on deck, I felt a little better and so did she; I says to 'er as I wanted for to get down in the cabin for to dress myself as I couldn't manage, so I asks the stewardess whether I might take a new 'at as I'd brought from Paris ashore without payin' no duty.

She says, "If you wears it they can't charge you."

I says, "I can't wear it now."

"Why," she says, "the weather's lovely, and we shall be in 'arf a 'our from this time."

So she brings me up my bonnet-box, and I puts on the 'at. Jest a-puttin' of my 'air on and a-settin' myself a little bit to rights on the cabin stairs.

It was a werry lovely 'at as Mrs. Wells 'ad bought, but didn't suit 'er complexion thro' bein' a yaller, with trimmins and a feather to match, and I'd got a green wail for to wear with it. Jest as I'd got it on, up comes Brown as nearly bust 'isself a-larfin', and says, "Well, of all the old guys as ever I did see, you beat 'em."

I says, "Brown, if you don't like it I won't wear it."

He says, "I don't care what you wears, if you

likes to make a figger of yourself, do it in welcome, but," he says, "you'd better come up on that upper deck, as the air is fresher." So he ketches 'old on me and leads me up some steps onto a sort of a landin' between the paddle-boxes, and there he set me on a camp-stool, as they calls it, as was werry wobbly. I didn't much like it, and was a-goin' to get up, when that camp-stool toppled over; I grabbed at somethink for to save myself, and ketched 'old of a brass tap like, when it give a puff of steam tremenjous as blinded me, and a screamin' whistle as made me give that start as over I rolled, and should have been down a flight of steps, only the captain were a-comin' up.

He says, "What did you do that for?" so I tells 'im; "Well," he says, "you've only saved me the trouble as were just a-comin' up to do it;" but, bless you, my green wail was soakin', and my 'at quite spilte, and the mercy is as I were not scalded to death.

So I goes down, and who should I see a-settin' on the deck but that Mrs. Wilby, as certingly I did not hold with; so she comes up to me as I spoke to cool, so she says—

"Oh, Mrs. Brown, I'm so glad to see you."

I says, "Escuse me, mum, but tho' I pities you I do not 'old with any wife a-boltin' from a 'usband, as whatever he may be is a 'usband still."

So she says, "Oh it's all right with Mr. Wilby, as I'm here with my brother and 'is wife." And if they 'adn't come to Paris a-purposely for to fetch her away from that old brute, and if she didn't go on and tell me 'ow she'd been treated by 'im as 'ad broke 'er back-comb in 'er 'ead, and pulled 'er 'air out by the 'andfuls, all thro' bein' that jealous, as she said, served 'er right for marryin' 'im, as no doubt she 'ad done jest to get provided for, as is downright infamous, I considers; and, for my part, I don't see as 'ow a woman as does such a thing can look down on the wilest, for she's rather worse off, 'cos the werry worst on us can turn over a new leaf, but when you're once married they're ain't no repentance but the grave or the divorce court, as wouldn't suit me, that's all as I've got to say. And yet 'ave 'ad a deal to put up with sometimes, with Brown's temper and redicule, but thro' a-bearin' on it 'ave brought 'im to be a lamb, tho' with a 'ot temper. I should 'ave 'eard a deal more about Mrs. Wilby, only the boat stopped still, and then began to wobble that awful as seemed to turn my werry 'art inside out.

I says to Brown, "It's 'ard for to perish in sight of land like this."

He says, "Don't talk foolery."

I says, "I ain't a-talkin' foolery, Mr. Brown, for well I remembers your a-readin' of it to me yourself

about a wessel as was dashed to bits on the rocks as the parties standin' on could 'ear the poor creeturs' shrieks as were a-standin' on that wessel a-flounderin' every instant."

"Why," he says, "that was off the Cape of Good Hope in a 'eavy see."

"Well," I says, "it may have been a good ope," but I don't see it, for a watery grave is a thing as I've 'ad 'ad a-orror on ever since a gal thro' bein' nearly drownded all thro' a cousin of mine as 'eld my 'ead down in the washin'-basin, thro' fun, and no doubt must have perished, but for havin' on thick boots as I lashed out behind with, and ketched 'im sich a shinner as sent 'im off a-'owlin' as 'adn't no business in the wash-'ouse, and me a-cleanin' myself up a-bit, as was always full of 'is larks, and took to the sea, poor feller, and lost 'is life thro' 'is cap a-blowin' off up aloft, as he'd been sent to for to fetch somethink as is 'ighly dangerous in a rollin' sea. "But," I says, "Brown, whyever don't we go on?"

"Oh," he says, "there ain't water enough for to let us go in."

I says, "That's rubbish with the werry oshun under our feet."

He says, "'Old your row," and so I did, not for 'is tellin' me, but because I was that dreadful queer as talk I couldn't, and for more than 'arf a 'our, I'm sure, we was a-dodgin' about, and thankful I was

when we come to a anchor and to get ashore, and a werry nice 'otel where I made myself comfortable, and the train went about eleven o'clock as would 'ave got us 'ome by the middle of the day; but I was that bad as go I couldn't, so stopped on to the arternoon, for I says, "I 'ates gettin' 'ome in the middle of the day, as don't seem nat'ral, and the next train 'll get us there by six," and I'd got Miss Tredwell for to write to Mrs. Challin for to 'ave tea ready with a bit of cold 'am and a hegg or two in the 'ouse, so I says, "It's sure to be all right."

Brown, he says, "Go when you please," and goes out for to 'ave a talk with parties aboard the steamer, as he's fond of seein' all about, and whatever he can see in 'em I can't think, for the werry smell of that ingin room turns me. We was off about three, and got 'ome jest on the stroke of six, as the sayin' is; and when we got to the door I was rather took aback at seein' all the winders open, and if Mrs. Challin didn't come to the door that sweep to look at, as I says she's 'ad the chimbly a-fire, and it was next thing to it, for she'd been and 'ad the sweeps, as I'd told 'er to afore I left 'ome; but I says, "Why 'ave them the werry day as I'm espected?"

She says, "You wasn't espected."

I says, "Not thro' that note as I sent you?"

She says, "We've never 'ad no note, 'ave we,

Nancy, or I'm sure I shouldn't 'ave 'ad the sweeps with a 'eavy wash on."

And if she 'adn't been and washed my white bed-furniture and the counterpin, and two blankets, and the whole place upside-down, all the carpets up, and my bed-room fresh scoured, with all the things piled on the top of the bed.

As to Brown, 'owlin' wolves was lambs to the way he went on, and arter sayin' as he hoped as I liked it, walks 'isself out.

I was that awful tired that I couldn't stir a 'and or foot till I'd 'ad a cup of tea, but then turned to, and by the time as my lord come in the place was all to rights, with a bit of 'ot supper ready, as put 'im in a good humour, and he says, "Well, arter all said and done, 'ome is 'ome." And I says to 'im, "Right you are."

I don't think as I ever did enjoy my own bed more in my life, for them French beds is that springy as you don't seem never to get your rest thro' bein' always on the move in them; but I will say as it's a wonderful place, and as I says to Mrs. Elkins, a old friend of mine as is a-goin' to Paris with 'er two daughters, as 'ave jest left a boardin'-school, and 'er a-dyin' to get 'em married, as I don't think as the Parishuns is likely for to fancy, thro' bein' far from 'andsome nor yet good figgers, and she come for to ask me about Cook's escursion, and I

says, "Well, all as I can say is as I looks on Mr. Cook like a father, and as to Mrs. Cook, she were a downright mother to me, and everybody that civil, and I'm sure 'ad their tempers tried," for there was parties as never would be satisfied, leastways Miss Tredwell was one, as I give 'er a good settlin' down myself, and there was a stuck-up chap in a white wescut as was always a-blowin' about 'is clubs. So I says one evenin' as he was a-talkin' werry big, I says, "Ah, them benefit clubs is werry good things in sickness, and somethink 'andsome to bury you with," as made parties larf, and he give me sich a scowl and walks out of the room, as were a-comin' the toff a little too strong over us.

The only unpleasantness as I know'd was among the ladies about a-givin' of their hages for to be wrote in the perlice book, as is like them perliceses impidences, for to ask sich a question.

As I says, "What's my hage to them, as am as old as my tongue, and a little older than my teeth," as the sayin' is; tho' I must say I couldn't 'elp a-smilin' when I see Miss Tredwell a-puttin' 'erself down five-and-twenty, as is eight-and-thirty, if not turned forty; and as to Mrs. Wells bein' only eight-and-twenty, why then I'm eighteen, that's all.

When I comes to look back calm at that Exhibishun, I must say as it's wonderful, and will be a deal better when it's finished, and all the things got there

and unpacked; but if there wasn't no Exhibishun there at all, it's worth any one's while for to see Paris, tho' no doubt they'd be glad for to find theirselves safe 'ome agin, for tho' London is a grubby 'ole, and there's room for improvements, leastways there did ought to be, tho' I've 'eard say as the ground is worth a guinea a inch in the City, yet it's 'ome, and a pleasure for to 'ave friends near you as you can understand, and not that everlastin' jabber a-goin' on in that gibberish as must be 'arf foolishness as they're a-talkin', and tho' I admires them French a good deal as is a clever 'ard-workin' lot, but I couldn't stop among 'em was it ever so.

Not as I've got any reasons for to speak agin 'em, and I'm sure treated me well, for even the Hempress 'erself, as we see one day in the Exhibishun, was a-lookin' at me with 'er hoprer-glass, and the Princess of Proosher as was along with 'er quite smiled as she passed, no doubt a-twiggin' at a glance as I were English, as you can tell among a thousand as give a good hoorare myself when I see 'er a-comin', and waved my 'artkercher that wiolent as I knocked a old gentleman's 'at and spectacles clean off, as he didn't take in good part, as is only what you might espect thro' bein' a German, as is parties I don't 'old with, tho' I've know'd some on 'em that pleasant as you wouldn't believe as they was Germans.

As to the Hemperor, I never shall forget 'im to my dyin' day as were a-drivin' in 'is pheaton and me a-crossin' the street, and 'ad to pull up for me as was werry perlite, and give a downright larf and so did the party as were with 'im, as was only their French ways, as is a light-'arted lot, and never thinks of to-morrer, as I'm sure I'm obliged to, for if that gal of mine don't nearly drive me mad as 'll go and take in a quartern loaf with all that stale bread in the 'ouse aready.

I ain't seen nothink of Miss Tredwell since as owes me money, which is p'raps the reason.

Poor Mrs. Wells, she come over to see me, as says Wells is a bigger brute than ever, a-ravin' about the French women's beauty, as I'm sure I see none on 'em as is a bold lot, a-goin' to the races as I see 'em myself as is called the jemmy mond, and a nice jemmy dressed out flashy bold-lookin' lot they was, that painted up and their 'air all yaller, but as I says no ladies, never in this world, to go on like that; and as to the men the more they dresses the wuss they looks, with 'ats on like black chimbly pots and their trousers that tight as I'm sure they're never made to take on and off, and as to them 'igh 'eel boots as the ladies wears with their short things, I'd sooner walk in pattens, as would be a firmer tread and not so likely for to give the ankle a wrench as you're a good time a-gettin' over, like a aunt of mine

as trod on a bit of soap left in carelessness on the kitchen stairs and come all down 'em with a run and a kick in 'er gallop, as the sayin' is, for ever arter.

Tho' I've 'ad my troubles among them French, as I kep' dark from Brown, as would 'ave took and nearly blowed their 'eads off, if he'd knowed it, and certingly a downright insult for to ever think sich a thing on me, and give me a dreadful turn, tho' soon over, for I was a-settin' restin' near one of them forin caffees, and I see one or two of them cock 'at chaps pass by and stare, and then they went away and others come; and at last one on 'em comes up and gives me a sort of a wink, and jerks with 'is thumb, as he meant me for to foller 'im.

I says, "Go on with your awdacious impidence," and give 'im one of my looks, but he wouldn't go on, but kep' a-pintin', and beckonin', and then two or three others come up, as begun a-talkin'.

So I says, "If you've got anythink for to say to me, speak out like men, and don't be a-noddin' and winkin' at me, as ain't one for to stand none of your nonsense."

So as they couldn't make nothink on me, they fetches a party as was a interpreter, and he says, werry perlite, as the perlice required my attendance for a little minit.

I says, "You don't mean to say as you're

a-goin' to take me up, as am a British subjec', and 'ave got our minister 'ere, and tho' I ain't of 'is perswasion, I don't believe, as a clergyman, he'd stand by and let me be insulted."

So he says, "Come, it's all right," so I follers, and was took into one of them places as did ought to be a caffee, but ain't, as is where the perlice stops.

A chap were a-settin' at the table, and asks for my pusport.

I says, "I ain't got sich a thing as a pusport about me, and only a port-mony, without much in it, for I never do go out with money in my pocket, not since that time as I 'ad my pocket picked in Whitechapel."

So the interpreter he stops me, and says, "Are you a married woman?"

I says, "In course, not as I've got my lines with me, but could tell any one where to lay their 'ands on 'em in the dark, as is the furthest corner of my left 'and top drawer."

He says, "What's your name, do you say?"

I says, "Brown—Martha Brown," as I wouldn't deny, was it ever so.

Well, they talked together a bit, and then the interpreter says as I must be searched.

"What," I says, "by foreign Frenchmen—never!"

"No," he says, "there's a lady as 'll do it. Step in 'ere."

Well, I don't think as ever I was in sich a fright, and as to that party as was to search me, I never see anythink more like a man in petticoats, with a mustarch on 'er upper lip, for all the world like a 'orse-marine, as the sayin' is.

I didn't 'arf fancy being searched, but it was only my pocket as they turned out, as is a good stout jane, and 'olds a-many things, and I do believe as they was a-larfin' when they took out that little straw bottle as I always carries, but seemed satisfied, and says as I might go, but I says to the interpreter, "Whatever does it mean?"

"Oh," he says, "only a mistake, as you must look over, thro' there bein' a many bad characters about as is a-plottin' for 'sassinatin', and it was thought as you was one in disguise, thro' their thinkin' as your little bottle was a pistol."

"Why," I says, "the awdacious wagabones, they must 'ave been a-tamperin' with my pocket for to know as I'd got it at all, and as to bein' a 'sassin in disguise, I'm sure I don't look like a man dressed up in woman's clothes, as I do believe that one is as turned my pocket out;" and I says "You'll 'ear more on it," for I ain't one to be trampled on and not turn, like a worm, as the sayin' is.

So he says, "I 'ope you'll look over it, as am English myself, and wouldn't 'ave stood by and seen no insults offered you; but," he says, "I do assure you as they're obliged to be careful, for them 'sassins is that hartful as they'd take any one in."

So I didn't say nothink to nobody, for really there's no tellin' what them perlice won't do, as seemed always for to 'ave their eyes on me, and quite accounts for what 'appened one day as I was a-walkin' about the Exhibishun all alone and was a-lookin' at some werry wonderful old ancient things as I see 'ad come from England. They was things as did used to belong to them Romans when they was over 'ere, so I know'd as Brown would like to see 'em, and as it was jest on the time for meetin' 'im, as we'd made a rondywoo, as the French calls it, close by, I goes out of the place for to meet 'im, and 'adn't got werry far when I remembered as I'd left my camp-stool, as I always took with me, behind.

I turns back, and if they 'adn't been and shet the place up, tho' not near the time.

So I knocks at the door, as is a sort of slidin' petition, and up comes a surjon-de-will, and tells me to move on, or, as he called it, circulate.

I says, "I wants my camp-stool."

He only talked more louder, 'cos I knocked agin with my umbreller.

I says, "I'll 'ave it," for I'd been a-settin' there quiet a-takin' a little refreshments as I'd brought in a basket, thro' not a-likin' to pay that price for everythink, and 'ad been took quite faint, as walkin' round and round always do make me, and felt as I might want that camp-stool agin, for you ain't never safe in that Exhibishun about them seats, as some on 'em is free gracious and others you've no sooner set down on than up comes a woman and wants two soos, as she takes and then gives a click at a little round brass box as she've got a-'angin' at 'er side like a watch, as is to check 'er from a-collarin' them soos, not as I sees as that can do it, for she ain't no call to click the thing if she don't like to; but any'ow, I don't see the fun of payin', so takes my camp-stool, and says to that surjon-de-will, "I'll have it."

But he only went on a sacree-ree-ree-in, and pushes me away, and jest then Brown he come up, and says, "Whatever are you at?"

"Why," I says, "a-tryin' to get my property out of this 'ere place."

He says, "What property?" and when I told 'im, if he didn't say as he was glad as I'd lost it, as I should be sure to come to grief with it some day, and wouldn't let me 'ave it out with that surjon-de-will; and little did I think as 'is words would prove true about that camp-stool, as I got back the next day

and 'eard say as the reason as they'd shet that place up was as some of them crowned 'eads was in there, but whyever they calls 'em crowned 'eads I can't think, as ain't got no more crowns to their 'eads than I 'ave, for I see that 'ere King of the Belgiums a-walkin' about with 'is good lady, and no more dressed than nobody else, as in my opinion they did ought to be, for I'm sure to see the photygrafts of royal families, as you see all about the place, they ain't no more like kings and queens than Mr. and Mrs. Wileman, as was photygraffed with all the children, and as plain a lot as you'd set eyes on in a day's walk, as is what I calls stuck up rubbish, bein' done like that.

But as to that camp-stool, it was as near my death as tho' it 'ad been a field of battle itself, as is what it's called arter, for I took it into the Exhibishun, and was a-settin' there oppersite to a lovely picter as I wanted for to 'ave a good look at, and in course thro' not 'avin' my eyes at the back of my 'ead, as I told 'em, couldn't see one of them fotiles roolong, as they calls them bath-chairs as parties is wheeled all over the place in as ain't got no use in their limbs. Well, the party as were in this one as run agin me 'ad got a double oprer-glass a-lookin' at the picters, and the party as were a-rollin' 'im he was a-lookin' too, and if that fotile didn't ketch the back leg of my camp-stool with its 'ind wheel

and send me right over, and in fallin' I give the party in the fotile sich a back-'ander with my umbreller as in course I 'adn't no control on, and give me a additional shove back agin and fell with my basket under me, and a mercy as the bottle of wine in it didn't cut me to death in breakin', as were none of your winegary wine but a nice bottle of bone as they calls it, thro' bein' a dry wine no doubt, as run all over the place, and parties thought I was a-bleedin' to death, and if they didn't take and carry me off a-'ollerin' for 'elp to what they calls the succours for the blessed, as is the medical departments, and then quite short with me for not bein' injured, as no doubt was a-longin' for to operate as is their ways, and I lost the camp-stool, as were p'raps as well, and it might 'ave led to wuss thro' never bein' quite up to my weight; and of all the stains as ever you see in my green musling as'll never come out without a-fetchin' out the colour as well.

I'm sure the 'air-breath escapes as I've 'ad is wonderful, and as nigh burnt to death thro' a-fallin' back'ards on to where they was a-layin' down that asfelt, for I was a-walkin' only a-thinkin' what a filthy smell it made as did ought in course to 'ave been all done afore the public was admitted and not to be a-doin' it with crowds about, and only a bit of string for to warn you off. Well, jest as I was close to it, if them beasts on the camels

didn't come by, and took it into their 'eads to turn tail, as made parties all press back, and bein' next that bit of string as they'd only drawed across the path, I was nat'ral pressed agin it as give way with my weight, and down I sets on the 'ot asfelt, not as it were bilin', as must 'ave been my instant death, but that 'ot as to make it unpleasant, not to say painful, and stuck to it like wax.

Screams is nothink to what I uttered, a-thinkin' as it would burn thro' and thro', and it's a mercy as I 'adn't got on my thin musling thro' the day bein' chilly and a-blowin' up for rain; but, bless you, that back breadth of my coburg is downright ruined, and I'm glad as I 'adn't my black welwet cape on as nothink wouldn't never 'ave taken that pitchey stuff out on.

We wasn't far off from the Exhibishun, in fact a pleasant walk without the sun was too 'ot, and then a downright biler.

So them young Walkers as 'ad come over only the night afore asked me if I'd go to the Exhibishun the next mornin' along with them and two or three more as were a-goin' to walk, and I'd said as I were agreeable, so off we started, and a werry nice walk we 'ad till you gets to the end where there certingly is a fine wiew of Paris, but they've been and laid the stones down as cripples you in crossin' the road to a flight of the werry widest

steps as ever I see as leads down to the Exhibishun, as is a reg'lar eyesore for to look at for hugliness, and a gasometer all over.

When we got to the top of them steps, if them young chaps didn't say as the best way to get down them steps would be to run down 'em, and I says as I thought so too. If they didn't say, "Come on," and one a one side and the other the other, ketched 'old of me under the harms and run me down, in spite of my 'ollerin'; and then, when we'd got to the bottom, and werry nigh run slap into a 'buss, as were a-passin', if they didn't stand me out as I'd asked 'em for to take me down; as certingly I did say in joke as I wished some one would carry me, but never thought to come down with a run like that, and the kicks as I got from them two chaps was hagony.

But 'ere I am, safe and sound, arter all, and this I will say, as any one as wants to see the Exhibishun 'ad better do as I did, all except a-takin' of a ice in the Pally Royal when over-'eated arter dinner, and thought as I should have died arter it; but I will say as they've always got brandy 'andy at 'and, as is a fine medicine, and thousands owes their lives to; so I never goes out without it, if ever so little, and wouldn't was it ever so. And as to your wishin' to know what I thinks on it, Mr

Scratchley, them's my wiews, tho' Brown is that aggrawatin' as he'll contradict every word as I says, and yet don't remember nothink 'isself, as I says, whatever is the use of goin' about with your eyes in your breeches pockets like that, as I wouldn't, if I wore 'em, for it's my pride for to notice everythink and everybody, and there's a many things as I'd 'ave altered in that Exhibishun, yet in course there ain't nothink perfect in this world, and we must take what we gets and be thankful, as is my opinions, and never ashamed to own to 'em nowheres, tho' not thankful, I must own for that feller a-fillin' of my shoe with water, as certingly were baggy at the side thro' bein' a easy fit, and 'im a-waterin' the place all over to lay the dust, nor yet for many things as 'appened to me, but we must take the rough with the smooth, as the lady saidaboard the steamer as pitched 'ead foremost down them cabin-stairs jest as I were a-comin' up with a 'eavy lurch, as they calls it; but don't think as she'd 'ave took it that cool if she'd been where I was, and werry nigh smashed the steward's boy, tho' I never will believe as it was me as battered that Britanier metal tea-pot like that, as 'ad the spout all awry, like Miss Tredwell's nose, as she said were owin' to 'er being laid down in infancy in a easy-chair for a instant, and a aunt of 'er ma's

come in sudden and set down on 'er unawares, and bein' a lusty figger, disfiggered 'er for life, tho' in my opinion born so is the truth; not as it makes no difference, for nothink won't alter it now, tho' she did say as a medical man 'ad offered for to cut 'er a new one out of 'er fore'ead, as I says to 'er must be rubbish, for there ain't no solid flesh there to work upon, tho' it certingly is wonderful what they can do, not as I likes bein' 'acked and cut about myself; but certingly did know Matilda Sloman as 'ad one leg shorter than the other, as they cut 'em both down to one size in a jiffey, not as ever she could walk without a shuffle, as is better any'ow than a downright cripple.

So that's all as I knows about it, and any time should be 'appy to let you know anythink, thro' bein' one as keeps things to yourself, and not go a-blabbin' about everywhere, as what I likes is everythink done on the quiet, as is the way with them French. They do say as there's things under that Exhibishun as nobody don't suspect nothink about, not as I believe much of that, for I've 'eard say as when the floors was took up of the Great Exhibishun at London there wasn't nothink found of no great walue, and must 'ave been a sell for the party as 'ad give money for all as was to be found there, as I'm sure I must 'ave lost my brooch down,

tho' not of no walue, tho' one doesn't like to lose nothink, no more I didn't in Paris, only some soos as I dropped, as I only 'opes some one found as is wuss off than myself.

THE END.

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

Mrs. Brown presents 'er complimongs to Mrs. Eardley, and if you've quite done with my black welwet mantle as you borrowed last Febuary, a-pretendin' for a pattern, tho' often seen out in it arter dusk, by parties as shall be nameless, as wouldn't stoop to be spies, let me 'ave it back as is required thro' Mrs. Brown a-goin' up into the 'ighlands, as is my own business, the same as the land of Egyp', and you need not make no remarks to Miss Challiner, as I only considers 'er a workwoman with 'er shoulder growed out, as never come from too much settin' but was born so I'm sure, as is a meddlin' creetur, and if ever she comes across me, I'll send 'er off with a flea in 'er ear, as the sayin' is.

And pre'aps you'll let the gal 'ave it as is a-waitin', as in course I alludes to the mantle, as I'll 'ave, if above ground, and considers you a ungrateful good-for-nothin' individjual, as is a word I wouldn't stoop to use, but only will remind you as tho' pre'aps a wulgar old cat behind my back am that same Mrs. Brown as come and nussed you from the jaws of death, as the sayin' is, and 'ave lent you money, as you 'ave no doubt forgot; and as to the flannin gownd when you was a-recoverin', you may keep it.

Not as I am one to listen to no tail-bearers, well a-knowin' as the dog as can fetch can carry, as the sayin' is, and adwises you as the next time as you drinks tea, not a 'undred miles from Kennington Oval, not to talk of Mrs. Brown a-makin' a fool of 'erself along with Mr. Cook's escursion on a camel, as is only your dog in the mangy ways.

Not as ever I sets up to be a fine lady, tho' I might 'old my 'ead 'igher than a many, thro' 'avin' been up a perrymid, as can pay twenty shillin's in the pound, as is more than some dukes can.

But one thing I will say, mum, and dares you to

contradict it, as there is them as goes along with Mr. Cook, as is ladies and gentlemen all over, as their manners proves.

As ain't no low-lived ways with them a-grabbin' at everythink, all a-wantin' to be fust, but a-waitin' their turns for bed-rooms, a-standin' round Mr. Cook that patient, like lambs at a slaughter-'ouse, and no grumblin', nor nothink, not as they've any cause to, for all the trouble is took off their 'ands, and only got to eat their meals and enjoy themselves.

As to you're a-rediculin' me about tea-totalers, I 'ave only got to say as I never 'ad the arrysipilas in my 'ead all thro' 'avin' been too free with sperrits, as is things I 'olds with in moderations, partikler medicinal.

As to Mr. Cook a-interferin' with your drinks, of course he wouldn't never think on it, tho' he don't 'old with it, and scorns a flat bottle, and 'ave knowed 'im refuse what they calls Athole brose, as is the Scotch for broth, and certingly I do think as whisky broth is a-comin' it a little too strong, even for the 'ighlands.

But yet, mum, it ain't for you to throw a glass of sperrits and water arter supper in my face; as I defy you to say I took more than one, tho' pressed for to fill up, but if I took a gallon, it's nothink to you, as I considers no better than a woodcock for suction, and may bring a action, if you like, the same as I means to.

And as to my takin' six lessons in writin', as you've put all about the place, there ain't no disgrace in that as paid the money down afore'and, and never run up a public-'ouse score of fourteen pounds, nor got a black-eye from my 'usban' thro' bein' found on the 'earth-rug unsensible with my own mother a-'angin' on to the front railin's a-'owlin', and took 'ome on a stretcher.

Next time as you wants anyone's character took away, pre'aps you'll look at 'ome, as where the shoe pinches is best beknown to them as wears it, as my own business is to me; and when you are asked for to pay my espenses, then you may 'oller about my goin' on a escursion.

Not as you need think as I'd forgot all about askin' you to go to Margate with me, as 'ave been

there, and still would go, as the sayin' is, as will be the first week in August, but am glad as I've found you out, so as not to 'ave a wiper a-festerin' in my bussim to spy out all my doin's, and go and make larks of me behind my back everywheres; and if Mrs. Eardley considers that actin' like the lady, I don't, and Mrs. Brown don't want no more of your acquaintance.

As to your recipy for makin' mixed pickles, it's all fomented, and only fit for the dusthole, as is where I wouldn't 'ave it throwed for fear of its petrifyin' all over the neighbourhood, as is the fit place for a false friend.

So never no more from me as remains,

Yours scornful,

MARTHA BROWN.

As I shall go all over Urope most probable with Mr. Cook, if I likes, and not ask you, and so says my good gentleman, as never could a-bear you.

MRS. BROWN IN THE HIGHLANDS.

I SAYS, "Brown, if you're a-goin' to Scotland, as is a chilly sort of a place as I've 'eard say, with mists as will wet any Englishman thro' and thro' in a instant, take my adwice and wear your double flannins, as will asorb perspiration, which when checked sudden, is well knowed to 'ave throwed thousands on their backs, and brought many a one to their long 'omes, as the sayin' is. And whatever you do, don't you go a-leavin' off your trousers up there, as tho' they may be a encumbrance in climbing, is not to be throwed off in a 'urry nowheres; the same as 'appened to a Irish party when we was a-goin' across from Bristol after 'arvestin', that ragged as parties aboard bought 'im a new pair out of charity, thro' not bein' common decent, leastways, second-'and of one of the sailors as took and pitched the old ones overboard on the spot as made that Irish party 'owl ten thousand murders, as was

'itched up ag'in lucky with a boat 'ook, and found as he'd got golden suvrins sewed up in the waist-band as was 'is savin's, as shows you never didn't ought to throw anythink away sudden, without a-lookin' at the linin's.

And I says, "As to your a-goin' about without 'em, as may be all werry well for them Scotch as is used to it, but I'm sure as I never could bear the sight of you, such a figger, let alone the rheumatics in your knees, as you'll be sure to 'ave, as can't bear never to be about the bed-room without 'em, even while gettin' up a-shavin', tho' always a fine leg as you might be proud on."

So Brown he says to me, "If them's your notions, then I suppose you won't be persuaded for to come to Scotland."

"Well," I says, "in course I shouldn't 'ave to show my legs. And it don't need no persuasions never for to make me do my duty, and in course if you wishes it, I'll go."

"Why!" he says, "I think as it would do you good."

"Well," I says, "I 'ad almost made up my mind not to go nowheres this summer, but a week at Margate, as I do enjoy myself at, and is worth all the other foreign parts wherever I've been to put together."

For I do say as Margate of a fine day, with the

wind a-blowin' you to bits like 'urricanes up your back at the end of the jetty, is 'ealth and strength by the mouthful, and always makes me enjoy my wittles with a good appetite, and every one seems in that good 'umour, as is a reg'lar 'oliday.

I'm sure them 'Sembly Rooms is that grand as is only fit for kings and queens to dance in, as George III. was knowed to do often, with 'is picter carved over the chimbly, and then there's lots of other places as is for them as is more larky like, but the 'Sembly Rooms suits me best, thro' bein' a lady and tho' one of them as their dancin' days is over, but like to see others a-enjoyin' theirselves on the quiet.

"Well," says Brown, "all I've got to say s that you can come to Scotland if you likes, and go to Margate too; as ain't nothink of a ourney."

"Law," I says, "as to that, no journey ain't nothink now-a-days;" for the way as one is whisked thro' the world now is like fairy tales, and would 'ave made my grandmother stare, as only made one journey in all 'er life, as was to Croydon Fair and back, as is the time as pork and walnuts did used to come in season, but now is eat all the year round promiscuous, not as ever I'll believe as pork can be 'olesome in the dog days, and as to them walnuts as you get in spring, all dried up inside, as

the skin won't come off, they're downright beastly, and as bitter as soot.

Ah, poor old soul, she did often used to tell me about that journey, as was werry nigh 'er death thro' the shay cart as she went in bein' upset in the Boro' ag'in a brewer's dray, and put 'er elber out and wasn't never able to straighten 'er little finger to 'er dyin' day.

She was a chatty old soul, and often told me 'ow 'er father come up from Lincolnshire in the tail of the waggon, as were three weeks on the road, and come up with the Pretender's army as were a-marchin' on London thro' bein' the rightful King, and would 'ave took it too, only got a-quarrelin' on the road, as made King George for to shake in 'is shoes thro' fear, as wasn't nothink but a German wenturer, and 'ad got all the crown jewels and things packed up aboard a wessel in the Thames ready to lewant with 'im to Germany, as is where 'e'd 'ave sent eveythink else as he could lay 'is 'ands on, jest like all the rest of them foreign waggerbones as 'ave reg'lar eat us out of 'ouse and 'ome.

Brown he busts out a-larfin' and says, "I do believe, Martha, as you could write a 'istory."

"Ah," I says, "and when I do, you don't ketch me a-puttin' down a lot of lies as is what 'istories in general is; tho' I do believe all the same as the story of Jane Shore is true, as they did used to say

died in a ditch, and serve 'er right too, a 'ussey for to go and desert 'er lawful 'usband for that 'ere waggerbone Edward the Sixth."

"Hold on," says Brown, "it wasn't Edward the Sixth as died a child."

"Ah," I says, "and a good thing too if a lot more 'ad done the same, for I'm sure to read 'ow they went on is enough to turn one's blood, and when I see 'em all at Madam Tussor's in Baker Street, I says, talk of Chambers of 'Orrors, that's where them kings and queens did ought to be amongst the other murderers, and as to that old 'ussey Queen Elizabeth, why 'angin' was a deal too good for 'er; and I'm sure that George the Fourth, many a better man 'ave ended their days on the scaffoldin'."

Brown he says, "When you've quite done a-runnin' down them crowned 'eads, pre'aps you'll say whether you're a-goin' to Scotland or not."

I says, "Brown, your wishes is laws; so if it's Scotland, or Cream of Tartar, or anywheres else as you wishes me to go, I'm there."

But I says, "Whatever can be a-takin' you to Scotland, Brown," as is that wild and rocky, as nothin' but them 'igh dried stuffs, like plaids, as is pretty wearin', and snuff won't grow there, tho' I must say as I 'ave tasted Scotch ale, as drunk pleasant with a bit of cheese and biscuit, and some

fine old whiskey as did used to be made from the dew as falls upon them mountings."

I knows what it is, for I've often tasted it myself at old Mrs. McClogskin's, as kep' a boardin'-'ouse for Scotchmen, as was travellers, close ag'in Fleet Street, as were a dingy old place, with drains enough to pison you, and smelt of onions from mornin' till night, and never wouldn't 'ave a winder open, nor the carpets up, nor yet the sweeps; and blankets on the beds as was the colour of coffee, and worn like sieves, as I wouldn't sleep in now not to be Queen Wictoria.

But were a kind-'arted soul as ever broke bread, tho' nothink couldn't induce 'er to wash 'er 'ands, nor change 'er widder's weeds, as she wore to 'er dyin' day for McClogskin, as died of gout in the stomick in the back parlour, thro' bein' that lusty, as go upstairs he couldn't, and would never 'ave been got down ag'in dead or alive in this world, with a as'ma as might be 'eard across the road, and never went to bed sober for over twenty years, and they do say must 'ave drunk enough to 'ave floated a man of war, and were berried in Bun'ill Fields along with the rest of them others as belongs to that Paradise Lost set, thro' not a-'oldin' with the Established Church; as ain't consecrated ground, and that full now, as 'ave obligated 'em to take to the simmeteries, as is

divided by a iron fence from them as 'ave Christian berrial.

As is a thing as some don't old with, so in course wouldn't be no punishment to be berried at the cross roads by torchlight with a stake drove thro' you the same as the man as murdered 'is wife and 'er mother out by Shadwell, and then went and drownded 'isself in the dry dock, as were brought in "fell o' the sea," as is the same as found drowned, tho' not accidental death; but, in my opinion, did ought to be always trumpery insanity, as it's not likely as any one would go to do it in earnest, for life is sweet, tho' uncertain, and we all clings to it up to the last, like old McClogskin did to the whiskey bottle, and 'is last words was death don't shake the liquor, as were 'is rulin' passion strong in death, as the sayin' is, and precious strong it was, for he wouldn't 'ave 'ardly a drop of water put to it, and the werry smell on it was enough to take your breath away; leastways I did used to think so when a mere gal, as did used to stop with 'em a good deal on and off.

Not as my dear mother could a-bear 'er dirty ways, as went to nuss 'er at the last, for it 'appened as she died jest afore I married; and never shall I forget that 'ouse, as the cats was let run all about, and a pug dog as 'ad been bed-ridden in a easy-chair for many a month thro' bein' over fed, and

the last thing as he 'ad were a fine loin chop, with the place a-swarmin' with rats and mice, for them cats was too well fed to catch 'em.

Talk of 'appy releases, that was one; for I do believe as the putrid fever would 'ave broke out if she'd lived another month, and yet of all the kind souls, as would give you the clothes off 'er back, and it's a wonder they didn't walk off of theirselves, and share 'er last crust with a friend, and never shet 'er door ag'in a relation 'owever poor, as is what I calls a noble 'art, as is the way with them Scotch, as I've knowed as poor as church mice and as proud as Lucifer, as the sayin' is.

It wasn't no use me a-goin' on talkin' to Brown, for he was a-snorin' that loud, as showed 'im to be sleepin' 'eavy on 'is back.

Some'ow I couldn't get to sleep, and kep' a-droppin' off and a-wakin' up, a-fancyin' as I was got to Scotland, and a-dancin' in a kilt, as is a thing I'd die fust afore doin', tho' I 'ave seen a picter of a fieldmale a-forgettin' 'erself like that.

Well, I'd just dropped off sound, when I got a back'ander across the face, as made me jump up like a lamplighter, as the sayin' is, and if it wasn't Brown a-dreamin' too, as said he thought as he was a-playin' some of them wild Scotch games.

So I says, "If that's what the Scotch calls games," I says, "give me right down earnest, as you

can protect yourself ag'in, and not a secret foe as strikes you in the dark;" but law, he was all snores ag'in in a instant.

I says to Brown in the mornin', "I ain't one to give in to no suppositions; but," I says, "suppose that blow as you've give me accidental, seems like a warnin' ag'in Scotland."

"Oh," he says, "rubbish, it's all thro' 'avin' supped off crab, and took brandy arter it."

"Ah," I says, "it will 'arden shell-fish will brandy, it is well beknown, and werry nigh caused Mrs. Eldred's death, tho' only twopennorth as she took on the top of welks, as in course preserved 'em in sperrits, and made 'em like so much grissel, as the woman's stomick were never formed to disgust."

I must say as that there dream and the smack of the face as I got from Brown, which, tho' accidental, swelled my nose up like a sheep's kidney, seemed to set me ag'in Scotland, and I 'ad my misgivin's as I shouldn't feel at 'ome there, and 'ad almost give up the idea of goin', when who should come in but Maria Lukin, as is own cousin to Mary Ann Padwick's 'usband, as is well-to-do people in the leather line, leastways would 'ave rode in their carriage, but for old Lukin a-puttin' 'is 'and to a bill for a friend, as pretty nigh ruined 'im jest afore he died, tho' everythink wound up pretty comfort-

able for the widder and Maria, as is the only child, and as plain a gal as ever showed a face. Not as she can 'elp it, thro' not 'avin' made 'erself, as the sayin' is.

Well, when she'd been in not more than five minutes, she says to me, "Wherever do you think, Mrs. Brown, as ma and me is a-goin' to this summer?"

I says, "I'm sure I don't know, but I supposes Margate."

She says, "No, to Scotland."

I says, "Oh, indeed!"

"Yes," she says, "and all thro' Cook's escursion."

I says, "You don't mean that there Capting Cook as 'ave been all round the world, and I see in the paper is goin' to 'ave a statue set up somewhere by the Duke of Edinbro', thro' bein' nearly killed by them savages."

She says, "I never 'eard as he were a capting."

I says, "Oh, bless you yes, and there's been books wrote about 'im by the score, as would 'ave been killed and eat too, by them kanibal savages in them Sandwiches."

"Oh," she says, a-bustin' out larfin', "you're a-talkin' about what 'appened many many years ago."

I says, "Escuse me, my dear, I knows as I am old enough to be your grandma pretty nigh; but,"

I says, "it ain't manners for to larf at old age, tho' in course I remembers many things 'as 'appened afore you was born or thought on, as can well recollect Queen Caroline 'erself a-comin' to London, and the mob a-breakin' all the winders in Westminster as didn't light up no 'luminations in 'er 'onour, as were a misguided party, no doubt; and they do say give to drink, and died quite sudden thro' a-takin' a dose of laudanum on the top of magnesia, as is a nasty medicine in my opinion, as will lay like undissolved lead in the constitution, and whatever she could 'ave took laudanum on it for I can't think, unless it were give 'er for to get 'er out of the way of that waggerbone, 'er 'usban', like the Princess Charlotte in a bason of gruel, as wanted for to go to the play 'isself, and was stopped at the door by old Townsend, the perlice officer, as told 'im she were inside, and turned back in a instant."

Well I remember myself a-seein' that old man in a brown wig a-settin' in the gallery of St. Martin's Church, as old King George did always used to shake 'ands with reg'lar, but must 'ave been a cruel old wretch for all that, for I've 'eard my dear mother say as he took and chopped the four legs of his next door neighbour's little dog up to the fust jint, thro' the poor beast a-runnin' into 'is passage with dirty feet, ag'in 'is will.

"So," she says, "I'm sure, Mrs. Brown, I didn't go to larf at you, for ma says as you're the best company out, and sent me over to see whether you wouldn't go to Scotland with us, as will be a delightful trip."

"Ah," I says, "my dear, I've made many a trip in my time, but," I says, "I think as my trippin' days is over, tho' it's werry sing'ler as Mr. Brown and me was only a-talkin' a Sunday about Scotland."

"Oh," she says, "do come, it would be such fun."

"Well," I says, "any'ow take off your bonnet and 'ave a cup of tea, as I'm all alone; and I'll put you into the bus myself, as'll take you almost from door to door," for 'er ma and 'er was a-livin' out Nottin' 'Ill way, as the busses runs to from Beaumont Square to, as is close ag'in our 'ouse.

She's a werry clever gal that Maria Lukin, and 'ave 'ad a good edication, with 'er 'ead put on the right way, as the sayin' is, tho' it might 'ave been straighter. I knows all the 'istory of Scotland by 'art, and quite made me long for to go, a-talkin' about Rob Roy and Mad Bess, and Queen Mary, as was murdered before 'er own 'usban's eyes, jest arter supper, as walked in 'er sleep, and so blowed the gaff, as the sayin' is, tho' a wulgar espression for a lady.

So when Brown come in to supper, as were pickled salmon and a cowcumber, with a onion to make it 'olesome, I says to 'im, "Do you know, Brown, arter all I think I should like to go to Scotland with Cook's escursions, as is wonderful cheap."

"Right you are," he says, "and 'owever he can do it, I can't make it out, for I'm sure them as went all over Egyp' with 'im, it's surprisin' to 'ear 'em talk of 'ow comfortable they was."

"Ah," I says, "I've often wished myself at Jericho for not a-goin' along with 'im, that time when we was in Egyp', to Jerusalem, as I 'opes to see now afore I dies, tho' I must say as the saddle don't suit me, a-gallopin' over them desserts."

"Well, then," says Brown, "you'll go to Scotland. I'll get the tickets to-morrow, and we must start next Wednesday fortnight as ever is."

Some'ow or other I had my misgivin's about Scotland, tho' in course I were not a-goin' to blow 'ot and cold, as the sayin' is, about goin'. So accordin' began for to get ready.

Mrs. Pennel, as is a werry respectable widder close by us, as is quite friendly like in lookin' in for a chat, tho' rather too fond of talkin' about 'er neighbours for me. She says to me, "Whatever you do, Mrs. Brown, take plenty of brimstone with you, for it's a fine thing, and ain't to be got in Scotland for love or money."

I says, "If you means for a medicine, it's one as I don't 'old with, for I considers it a nasty lowerin' thing, tho' some parties do still give it to children in the spring with treacle, tho' a old fashioned remedy.'

"Oh," she says, "it's fine for skin disorders."

I says, "I ain't got a speck on my skin, not so much as a freckle, let alone no disorders."

"No," she says, "but look out for the fiddle, as is werry much about in Scotland," and busts out a-larfin'.

I didn't see no joke, but jest then Tarboy's young man come up in the cart, and I wanted to send back them curtain poles as was too short for the back parlour winder, so 'ad to run out of the room to stop 'im from drivin' off without 'em, and didn't think to ask 'er what she meant by the fiddle, thro' Mrs. Elwins a-comin' in to tea jest then, and reg'lar drove everythink out of my 'ead thro' a disputin' with Mrs. Pennel about the Irish Church, as Mrs. Pennel is for and Mrs. Elwins ag'in, thro' 'er 'usban' bein' a City Mission as 'ave been in Ireland a long while, and 'ad a deal to say ag'in the Pope, and all manner.

She kep' a-sayin' as the Queen's throne weren't safe for 'er to sit on, thro' bein' underminded by Jeserists.

"Ah," I says, "no doubt it must 'ave got rickety

for want of use," the same as Brown's easy-chair as he 'adn't set in for months, thro' bein' away from 'ome, and the first time as he did set down off come a castor with a crunch, as nearly throwed 'im back'ards.

Not as Queen Wictoria cares a bit about 'er throne as she ain't never a-goin' to set on ag'in, as would make 'er nat'rally miss 'im more as did used to set by 'er side, not as it's any use a-givin' way to them feelin's, tho' I do not think if anythink were to 'appen to Brown, as I could never sleep in our four-poster ag'in myself.

Queen Wictoria, she's been and give up everythink—crown, throne, and all; and as to the Irish Church, what does she care about that, as never goes near Ireland 'erself, but if they was to try and touch the Scotch Church, as she attends reg'lar, she'd be up and at 'em like mad, as is never so 'appy as when she's a-'avin' 'er fling-up in the 'ighlands, and is that cheerful as she can go and see the servants' ball; but would rather lay 'er 'ead on the block than allow no dancin' nor goin's on in London.

Not in course as she's got any spite ag'in London, 'cos of 'er 'usban's death, as London couldn't 'elp 'im a-dyin' at Windsor.

As they do say were damp beds and the drains, but whatever they could 'ave been a-doin' to let 'im

get into either, I can't make out; tho' always one I've 'heard say as would look into everythink 'isself, and wouldn't allow no waste, not even down to the pig-wash. As shows a 'umble mind, and called the Prince Concert, thro' bein' that fond of music, as he would set a-playin' and a-singin' by the 'our together.

'Ow I come to know all about it were thro' Mrs. Malchin, as 'ad a friend married to one of them life guards, as is always quartered close ag'in the pallis in case as they might be wanted sudden, and she 'ad wonderful stories all about the royal family, as is what I don't 'old with, for what I says is this, "When kings and queens is on their thrones, in course they're public property, but when in the bussum of their royal families, why, let 'em do as they please; and whyever shouldn't Queen Wictoria 'ave the growed-up princesses frocks altered for the young ones, and let the young gentlemen wear their big brothers' clothes, as they'd out-growed."

Of course Queen Wictoria is a mother 'erself, and knows 'ow to turn everythink to account, and save the country money, as I'm sure it must go to 'er 'art to take the taxes when she knows as she's often obligated to put the broker in to get 'em, as was downright awful on poor Mrs. Cartlit, with 'im a-layin' a corpse, and four on 'em down with scarlet fever, and must 'ave 'ad the bed took from

under 'em if the neighbours 'adn't clubbed together and paid the money.

So in course Queen Wictoria a-knowin' them 'ardships wont spend a-farthin' more than she can 'elp, and I 'oners 'er for it, as is what I calls 'igh principles, and it's lucky as she don't know the money as they've been and spent a-buildin' that 'ere monyment in 'Igh Park, as 'ave been done while 'er back 'ave been turned, or she'd pretty soon 'ave stopped sich waste as would 'ave disgusted that Prince Concert altogether, as were that careful as to pay ready money for 'is clothes at Moses, and 'ave 'is boots soled and 'eeled twice over, thro' bein' brought up that economical over there where he come from.

For I've been there myself and knows as they considers clean linen estravagance, and never 'as their boots blacked, I'm sure, by the look on 'em, and lives on sour cabbage and sassiges as you may smell all down the street, with the beastliest beer as ever I tasted ; and always a-smokin', as will stop the stomick a-cravin' for food constant, as is a nasty 'norin' feelin' when short commons is your potion, as is pretty nigh always the case with them poor furriners.

As to the Irish Churches, I says to Mrs. Pennel, "I do 'ope as they'll give some money for to clean 'em up a bit, for there's one down Poplar

way, where all them poor Irish goes, as is dreadful poverty struck, and I 'ave 'eard say as the clergyman is pretty nigh starved to death, tho' a single man, and not like the minister of the parish church, as 'ave eleven children and a wife, all well dressed, as must take all the money he can get to keep, tho' I'm sure he can't live by 'is church, as is pretty nigh empty, thro' 'im a-offendin' all them as could pay for seats with 'is 'igh Church pranks, a-insensin' of the congregation with lighted candles, and all manner; as to the poor, none of them never goes to church, as is well known, except the Irish, tho' I 'ave 'eard say as there's some old people as goes reg'lar to prayers twice a day at one of them 'igh churches, and was allowed a shillin' a week for their pains.

Not as ever I speaks ag'in any one's religion, as isn't nobody else's business but their own. So I says, "Do drop the Irish Church, and let's get on with tea;" for I really did think as them two would 'ave come to blows over it, and as to Mrs. Pennel, thro' bein' a full 'abit, with 'er mouth full, I was afraid as she'd 'ave 'ad a fit, and kep' on sayin' as she'd 'ave all churches done away with on the woluntary principle.

"Ah," I says, "I remembers the voluntary well in all churches," tho' Miss Needham, as were blind, and lived next door, a-playin' the organ as

I've led 'er to myself at the 'sylum for a friend in St. George's Fields, and 'ave blowed the bellus too, as is 'ard work, and couldn't 'elp a-lettin' all the wind out at once, as made 'er scold me wiolent for cuttin' 'er music short, and made that row in the chapel jest as if the gas 'ad blowed up, and terrified the ladies that dreadful as fainted dead away, and screamin' like mad, and 'ung about the minister for protection till the poor man was werry nigh strangled on 'is pulpit stairs.

As were a populous preacher, with a 'and like a almond for whiteness, and a diamon' ring, as glistened wonderful when he put 'is fingers thro' 'is lovely black 'air, as curled beautiful all over; tho' too much grease for me, as I well remembers a-goin' into 'is westry a-smellin' quite faint of castor ile, as may be a fine thing for the 'air, but is a beastly smell under your nose, as I've smelt myself a-settin' behind a young lady at the Cristial Pallis, as 'ad 'er chin'on behind, a-stickin' under my nose, a-listenin' to the music, when I went for to see that 'ere Turkey Vice, as came there with the Prince of Wales for to see England, as was what I calls a shabby return arter the months as they'd been a-stoppin' with all that 'ere Vice over in Egyp', and might 'ave starved at that Cristial Pallis only but for one of them dukes a-standin' treat, a-knowin' well as they

couldn't live on fireworks, tho' they was Turkeys, as is used to be crammed all the world over.

I do believe as that Turkey knowed me ag'in, for I was a-standin' on the terris jest under 'is nose, as the sayin' is, in a lovely gownd looped up as is all the go now, with a blue parrysole lined with green and a pink fringe, and as to the Princess, she never took 'er eyes off me, as is lookin' thin, poor dear, as must 'ave the life dragged out of 'er I should say, with a-goin' about everywheres, a-openin' bazaars and docks and all manner, let alone four children, as is a 'andful for any one; and 'im got that stout as makes 'im look ten years older than he did ought to be, as I knows 'is age well, thro' bein' born on Guy Fox day that same year as Mrs. Rammage's little boy was nearly blowed to atomies thro' 'avin' 'is pocket full of squibs as Sammy Barlow took and set light to behind, a-thinkin' only to scare 'im, and so he did as was only put out thro' a-pitchin' 'ead-foremost into 'is mother's wash-tub as was a-standin' providential at the wash'us door as he run ag'in blindfolded with them squibs a-goin' off at all points, but more frightened than 'urt, tho' werry nigh 'is mother's death; and that's 'ow it 'appened as 'er seventh was born the same day as the Prince of Wales, as is now in the perlice and a-doin' well, tho' I wouldn't 'ave give a rush for neither mother nor child when he was three days

old, nor more wouldn't Mr. Blaxland the doctor as is a man I'd 'ave trusted my life to, as soon as look at 'im, tho' only the parish doctor, but a 'art big enough to attend Queen Wictoria 'erself, as is my esperiences of all doctors as is that kind and never a penny for their pains, with their rest broken night arter night, and no wonder as some will tie up the night-bell, thro' bein' reg'lar wore out, so as not to be disturbed in their sleep, as is often better than wittles and drink.

For I'm sure it was sleep as brought old Rack-straw back from death's door, as the sayin' is, and all thro' a-givin' 'im the wrong medsin, as were 'is grand-daughter's doin' as were left to watch 'im and give 'im the liniment to take, and dabbed 'is eyes with the black draft, as nearly killed 'er mother with the shock, a-comin' back in the room and a-seein' of 'im senseless with 'is eyes as black as the grate, but whatever could they espect from a gal of eleven, and never fetched the doctor nor the stomick-pump neither, and in my opinion a-thinkin' it was all for the best, as the sayin' is, and began a-quarrellin' over 'is diamond pin as he wore in 'is frill, when they 'eard 'im a-knockin' with 'is stick ag'in the wall, and found 'im woke up better than he'd been for years, and lived over fourteen years arter; but they never forgive that gal as married and emigrated, as was the best thing for 'er.

When Brown come in with the tickets he set 'is face ag'in a-goin' to Scotland along with Mrs. Lukin, as he said were a reg'lar brimstone.

"Well, then," says I, "she'll jest suit Scotland, as is where brimstone is wanted."

Says Brown, "If you goes a-cuttin' them jokes when you gets to Scotland, you'll get yourself into a 'ole"

I says, "I'm sure I ain't one to cut no jokes, and if there's nothink but 'oles to be got into in Scotland, I don't want to go, for they're places as I don't 'old with, nor yet corners neither for that matter, escept routin' 'em out, as is what you can't get one gal in a 'undred to do, without a-follerin' 'em about constant, as often makes 'em saucy, with a month's warnin' on the spot, for impidence is a thing as I won't take from no gal livin'.

When I 'eard we was a-goin' by the Middlin' Railway, I says, "Brown, I don't 'old with nothink as is middlin' when the best is to be 'ad, and I've 'eard parties speak werry much ag'in that line, and one gentleman wrote a letter, a-sayin' as he'd been pretty nigh shook silly thro' the carriages a-jogglin' about that wiolent, as is werry unpleasant, and brought on tremenjous words, with poor Mrs. Elkinton a-comin' 'ome by the Tilbury line, and a-goin' to take a little drop out of a bottle, as was dashed away wiolent from 'er mouth with a tremen-

jous jerk, as sent all the liquor a-flyin' over 'er next door neighbour's face and shirt front, as proved to be rum, and a total abstainer 'imself, as don't agree well together.

I must say as I got in that train with a misgivin' like, tho' a noble station, and more like Westminster Abbey on a large scale.

I wanted Brown for to insure ag'in accidence, but he don't 'old with it, a-sayin' as you're pretty safe on the rail.

"But" I says to 'im," why not insure, for," I says, "safe bind safe find," as the sayin' is, and I don't see the use of losin' your life when you might insure it for threepence; not as I can ever understand what they means by insurin', for I'm sure old Mr. Filby's life were insured at three offices, and yet he died in a fit for all that, so no doubt Brown is right arter all.

Whatever any one can mean by a-speakin' ag'in that railway as Middlin', I can't make out, for I'm sure we slipped along it like buttered slides, and got to Lester in no time, where we'd friends a-livin' as is a married niece of Brown's mother's, in the public line, as I 'ad never seen; but when she 'eard as we was a-goin' to join the escursion, wrote and made us promise for to come to their place.

She's a werry nice woman tho' serious, in the name of Warein, and no doubt he'd be fust-rate

company, but for bein' that deaf, as makes it 'ard to 'oller everythink at 'im thro' a tube; as were brought on thro' the gas-meter a-goin' off as he were a-superintendin', and no doubt went too near with a candle, as I 'ave know'd a lucifer myself pretty nigh the end of everythink with a leak in the pipe as is werry deceptive under the floor, and quite baffles you, unless you 'ave all the boards up, as is a dreadful job, partikler with the carpet jest put down.

Mrs. Warein she says, as they always went reg'lar every year somewheres with Mr. Cook, as did 'em both good, thro' bein' close confined in the business, as now their son carries on pretty much, tho' the old folks lives on the premises, as is all werry well, thro' the son bein' a widderer with three gals, as the eldest is jest on seventeen, and able to 'elp in the bar.

The Wareins was old friends with the Cooks, tho' different persuasions, thro' Mr. Cook a-'oldin' with tea-total principles; but, as I says, "Whyever should different opinions alter friendships," as the sayin' is, for I'm sure I knows them well as I'm the werry poles in sunder to, as the sayin' is.

We got to Lester two days afore startin' for Scotland, and the werry night afore, Brown got a letter a-sayin' as he must go back to Brummagem, as they calls it, thro' the bustin' of a biler.

I wanted to go along with 'im; but he says, "No! Martha, you go on to Edinbro', as is where I shall overtake you."

I says, "I can't think whatever you can want a-pokin' your nose into bilers and steam-enjins everlastin', as don't bring you in nothink."

He says, "Mrs. Brown, mum," a-lookin' that orseteer like, "you mind your business, and I'll mind mine."

I know'd by 'is way that he warn't in no charfin' 'umour, so I shet up, and as I says, arterwards, to Mrs. Warein, "If there is a thing as Brown's touchy on it's 'is business."

She says, "What is 'is business?"

"Well," I says, "that's more than I can tell you, escept as I knows he's been about them steam-enjins ever since he left the Docks, and there he 'ad to do with a patent steam-crane as carried a party as were a-pamperin' with the 'ook, as ketched in 'is clothes, up seven stories 'igh, and a thing as I never would go near all the years as Brown were at it, for I can't abear the name of no machinery, ever since the time as the biler blowed up in the basement at a sausage-maker's over in Merryker, when we was there, and went up right thro' the 'ouse, as were seven stories 'igh, and fell thro' the roof of the 'ouse oppersite, like a bomb-shell, into the middle of the table, where the family was a-

takin' their tea, leastways their supper, in the front kitchen, as shows the powers of steam, as ain't a thing to be trusted to a young negro boy, as turned it on when he should 'ave let it off; leastways, he always declared as the Irish party upstairs told 'im wrong down the pipe, as ain't the least likely, and that's the reason why I thinks as Brown don't never like to talk to me about 'is business, well knowin' as I'm that anxious as it is, always espectin' to 'ave 'im brought 'ome on a shetter, or all pieces in a basket; with my 'art in my mouth if there's a sudden knock at the door, or anythink unawares 'appens in the street."

I can't say as I relished startin' without Brown, tho' Mrs. Warein was that kind, and as to 'im, he kep' on a-carryin' bundles like a lap-dog all over the place; and thankful I was when we was in the carriages, for I'm always in a fluster a-gettin' off, and can't abear them whistlin's and screamin's as is kep' up constant, no doubt for to keep other trains a-comin' in sudden unawares, the same as they did at New Cross, and drove poor Mrs. Balcomb's 'ead thro' into the other compartment, as 'ad been to Woolwich to see her son off, and owes 'er life to 'er widder's bonnet, as is a covered shape and somethink like a bonnet, not one of them fal-lal things, stuck on the top of your 'ead, as they wears now-a-days as ain't no protection ag'in

nothink, and looks werry bold, partikler in a widder, as don't look 'arf like a widder, with no weeds, and crape not 'arf up to 'er knees, as did used to be up to the waist when I was young, and pre'aps as much overdone then as it's underdone now. Not as it's the weeds as makes the widder; for I'm sure Mrs. Parker, as kep' the "Catherine Wheel," she was a mask of crape and bumbizeen afore paramatter were 'eard on, and married ag'in in three months to a brewer's collector as know'd 'is way about.

I never did 'old with too much mournin', as is a 'eavy espense, and runs into money as is sure to be wanted, jest the same as funerals, as bein' berried in plumes can't make no difference to them as is gone, tho' meant as respect, as certingly a board of feathers is a solemn thing, and so is a pair of mutes at the door, but yet can be done without, in my opinion.

I was glad when we was once fairly under weight, as they calls it, as made the carriages run lighter, and kep' a-pickin' up parties by the way, as was all werry friendly and pleasant, partikler some as come on board at Derby, as is the place as the famous ram come from as 'ad all that wool on 'is back, as must 'ave been a 'eavy load for the poor beast, and glad he must 'ave been when sharin' time come; not as I 'olds with any one bein'

shared too soon, for I see as a farmer 'ad all 'is sheep froze to death thro' a-sharin' of their wool too soon, tho' it was June, as aint winter.

We certingly did 'ave a pleasant journey, and werry nice refreshment, as was mutton pies as they sold by the thousand, at a place called, beginnin with T——— as was werry nice and only tuppence, and a good glass of bottled stout as kep' me up quite fresh to Edinbro', as we got to 'twixt nine and ten.

I never was in a nicer 'otel, never, as were downright elegant, with a tea fit for a queen, as they always 'as in Scotland, thro' never bein' certain as Queen Wictoria won't drop in unawares and take 'em as she finds 'em, as is 'er ways in Scotland.

I never 'ad a nicer bed, and slep' like a pot, as the sayin' is, but wasn't never more took aback than when I went down to go out in the mornin', for if there wasn't wrote up in letters of gold as the introducin' of sperrits into that 'otel were strictly perhibited.

It give me sich a turn, for I felt as tho' I'd been and broke the laws of Scotland like in 'avin' a flask bottle like in my redicule and a little of the werry best packed away besides.

For if there is a thing as I can't abear, it's bad sperrits, as is pison, and is sure to lead to bad 'ealth werry soon for them as gives way to 'em.

What to do I didn't know. I'd a good mind for

to throw myself on the landlord's mussy, for he was a good soul I'm sure by the looks on 'im, and 'is son that perlite to me as if he'd been the Prince of Wales over ag'in, for I was afeared as pre'aps I might get that landlord into trouble and 'ave 'is licence took away for sellin' sperrits.

Mrs. Warein she larfed at me a-sayin' as that notice only meant as parties was not to send out for no sperrits nor nothink like that.

I says "Every one to their way is my principles, but," I says, "as long as parties keeps within moderations I don't see as they shouldn't take what is 'olesome; but I'm sure I don't wonder at some bein' drove to tea-totalers, for it's hawful to think of the wretchedness and misery as that drink brings about, and yet it don't seem fair to cut me off my beer 'cos my neighbour will take too much; but any-'ow, thank goodness, we may all do as we pleases, and if I'd my way I'd be down pretty sharp on them as got drunk and left their families to starve."

Certingly, Edinbro' is a lovely place, all built up a 'ill, as is tirin', with lovely monyments and all manner; partikler one as is put up to a Scott, as were the fust man as found out them parts, I suppose, and give it its name, as is called arter 'im consequentially, and is seated on 'is throne all so grand, but quite 'umble, with no crown nor spectre, as shows he 'adn't no pride.

The Castle is an old ancient place as nobody couldn't take, and I'm werry sure I should never get up to it, not if they'd give it me to live in free gracious for nothink.

But of all the old tumble-down out-of-the-way 'oles as ever I did see, it's the pallis, as they calls 'Ollyrood, not as there was any 'olly about it, nor yet anythink rood neither, for the gentleman as shows it were that perlite as he might be the King of Scotland.

I'm sure any one would think as he were as old as the place itself, to 'ear 'im talk about it, and all them as 'ave lived there, as must 'ave been a dismal 'ole at the best of times.

We met Mrs. Lukin and Maria at Edinbro', leastways fell in with them a-lookin' over that old pallis as I knowed a deal about thro' 'avin' 'eard tell about Mary Queen of Scots, as was the most beautiful woman as ever lived, and made old Queen 'Lizzybeth that savage as she cut off 'er 'ead, tho' only a wisitor, thro' spite, as shows what a jealous temper will do. 'Cos in course it were not 'er fault as she were that beautiful, as I've see a picter on 'er myself; not as she would be called a beauty now-a-days, but then you see it's all fashion, even about good looks, for I remembers the time myself when red 'air was thought a downright disfigurement, and now is all the rage, and parties a-goin' in

for to 'ave their 'air turned red, as is very well when nat'ral, but don't suit everybody.

They do say as Queen Mary be'aved bad to 'er 'usban', as made Queen 'Lizzybeth interfere; but whatever was it to 'er, a-meddlin' old cat, as is always the way with them old maids, as must be a-pryin' into other people's affairs, not but what I've 'eard all manner ag'in that there Queen Bess, as must 'ave been a old wixen, and boxed 'er own father's ears for turnin' his back on 'er, as in course were rude in 'im, but not actin' like a lady on 'er part to raise 'er 'and ag'in a parent as must 'ave been well on in life.

I must say as that bed-room as the queen slep' in was a stuffy 'ole, and no wonder Queen 'Lizzybeth 'ad to be put to bed by force when a-dyin', as Maria said was a judgment, for it's enough to give any one the 'orrors to look at it, partikler if she were timbersome in her last moments, thro' a bad conscience, as is the wust accuser, as the sayin' is.

I'm sure nothink but force would 'ave got me into that bed, as I don't believe ever could 'ave been a comfortable night's rest for any one, queen or no queen.

Maria Lukin, she 'ad a guide-book, as she kep' a-readin' out on, as throwed a deal of light, she said, on them dark ages; but I couldn't listen to 'er, and the party as was a-showin' it, and so,

between the two, got rather confused in my 'ead.

I can't think why they didn't take and build that pallis up on the 'ill, and not down among all that dirt, with sich narrer streets, as must 'ave been werry unhealthy for all the young royal family, with 'ardly a breath of hair to be got.

I suppose as they was obligated for to build it pretty strong ag'in them mobs as did used to break out that wiolent, and once bust into the prison and brought out a prisoner as they wanted for to rescue, and 'anged 'im arter all out of spite, but would 'ave been saved thro' 'is own sweet'art a-walkin' all the way to London for to ask pardon for 'er sister of Queen Caroline, and only got back jest in time as they was a-goin' to draw the bolt on 'er for ever, as isn't standin' now, thro' 'avin' been pulled down years ago, when King George come to Scotland, as couldn't a-bear to see nothink as reminded 'im of Queen Caroline, in course, and wore a kilt, as they calls it, down to 'is knees, a-makin' believe as he were a Scotch-man, and no more right to it than nothink, as were a lusty figger in a wig, and no whiskers, as you may see 'is portrait anywheres, life size, as was 'is pride; not but what I've 'eard them say, as see 'im, as he were a fine man to look at, tho' bad legs, as is the reason of unmentionables bein'

give up, with scars about 'is neck, as brought in them wide neckcloths to 'ide 'em, as is all pride arter all, and it would be as well for 'im if 'e'd nothink else to be ashamed on, nor to 'ide but 'is legs and 'is scars.

I'm partikler fond of history myself, and likes to 'ear about them kings and queens as lived before they was Christshuns, and went on like 'eathens all the world over, and seemed never 'appy but when they was a-fightin' and murderin' one another.

Not as Queen Wictoria would allow such goin's on now.

Miss Lukin she kep' a-gettin' on too fast with 'er book, and 'ad to come back ag'in and ag'in, cos she was a-tellin' us all wrong, about Queen Mary a-settin' at supper and 'avin' 'er secretary murdered afore 'er eyes.

Says the gentleman, "This ain't the room where it was done?" leastways he said, "This is no the room," as is 'is Scotch way of speakin'; but, law, there wasn't no stoppin' that Maria with her clack and 'er book, as kep' on a constant sort of a-jabberin', a-talkin' that fast as nobody couldn't make out what she was a-sayin'.

Says the gentleman, "Step this way, it's here where he was murdered."

"Oh yes," says she, "in cold blood, as is still wisible thro' a-showin' thro' the floor."

I says, "It's time as any one's blood were cold by this time, if it's all them years ago as he were killed," for the gentleman was a-sayin' as that party come to 'is end sudden on that werry floor just arter supper, through jealousy.

"Ah," I says, "and I've know'd the same 'appen thro' drink, with no jealousy."

But, law, the place looks like murder, and I'm sure I could pity a dog as 'ad to live tied up in that pallis, and as to any Queen a-livin' there, I'm sure she never did it of 'er own accord.

"No," says that gentleman, "she never did, it's all 'er enemies as says so."

"Ah," says I, "it's a pity to make enemies as 'll be sure to 'ave their knife into you, as the sayin' is, some day."

"Yes," says Maria, "and in them days they was always 'avin' their knives into some one, and as to blowin' 'er 'usban' up, I don't believe it."

I says, "Why ever shouldn't she blow 'im up if he deserved it; and I'm sure livin' 'ere would make the best of friends fall out occasional, and it may be a wife's duty to blow a 'usban' up now and then."

"Ah," says a young feller, "but she did it once too often, tho' some do say as it were all through Knox."

"Ah," I says, "if they come to blows I do not

'old with that, for the man, I says, "who would lift 'is 'and——"

"Oh, blow that," says the young feller, a-turnin' on 'is 'eel, as didn't show 'is manners.

I says to the gentleman, "Wasn't this 'ere pallis no better furnished when that queen lived 'ere?"

"Oh yes," says he, "it were, tho' it 'ave been werry much pulled about lately for Queen Wictoria to come and live in."

I says, "Go along with your rubbish. Queen Wictoria, indeed; why, she'd die of the blues 'ere in a week."

"Oh," says a lady, "it was all settled that she was to come, and that's the reason as a good many families as was livin' in the pallis was turned out to make room for 'er."

"Well, then," I says, "they may as well come back ag'in, for depend on it she'll never live 'ere, as looks as if it were 'aunted all over;" and the way as they've let the old church fall to bits, as is next door, and jest the place for ghosts to walk when the clock strikes twelve, not as I'm afraid of ghosts myself, thro' never 'avin' done nobody any 'arm, as they should come back to torment me before my time, not but what many's nothink more than impositions jest the same as the Cock Lane ghost, as my grandmother well remembered jest afore my

dear mother was born, as pretty nigh frightened Dr. Johnson to death when a-settin' up late a-writin' of 'is dixonary.

I don't think as ever I were more tired in my life than goin' about Edinbro', tho' we did ride, and as to me a-goin' up what they calls Arthur's Seat, I says, "It must be in a balloon, then," and you don't catch me at no such games, for I can tell you as my 'ead wouldn't stand no such wagaries, tho' they do say as you don't feel no motion in a balloon, and can't believe as you're a-movin' till you comes down with a bump, as sends you up miles 'igh ag'in.

But as I were a-sayin', I never was so tired as when I got into the train for to go on to Glasgow, where we was to start from along with Mr. Cook reg'lar, and fell that fast asleep as I never know'd nothink more till we was there.

For we'd 'ad a beautiful dinner at that 'otel at Edinbro', and it was that warm that I really did relish the water, tho' obligated to take a little somethink on the quiet afore startin', thro' bein' one of them constitutions as water don't suit, and might 'ave brought on the spavins in the train.

I'd 'ad a letter from Brown, tellin' me to go for'ard and he'd follow arter, as put me out a good deal, for tho' I was along with the Wareins, and 'ad 'eard Mr. Cook that 'igh spoken on, I did not relish a-goin' among them wild Scotch all alone, and yet

I couldn't turn back, 'cos if I did, why I should miss Brown altogether, so in course I 'adn't no choice in the matter.

When we got to Glasgow, I thought as Bedlam 'ad broke loose, for if it wasn't their 'olidays as they calls the Fast, and fast enough some was a-goin' it, with a fair and wild beast shows, a live giant, a fat 'ooman, and a circus, and all manner, all over the place.

I don' think as ever I walked out in such a crowd, as I wouldn't 'ave done, only Maria Lukin she kep' on a-worretin', that at last I give way, and said as I'd go a little way, for the days keeps out wonderful in Scotland, and tho' nine o'clock, it wasn't dark.

I 'ad'nt 'ardly got out afore I see as it wasn't no place for fieldmales, and says to Maria, let's turn back.

"Oh," she says, "do let's see a little bit of the fun of the fair."

Well, I walked on till the scrougin' got that unpleasant, that I says, "Maria, go back I must, and will."

A old feller as were standin' there says—

"Let the lassie tak' 'er pleasure."

I says, "Pleasure, indeed," I says, "it's pain, that's what it is."

Oh, the way as that old feller went on at me,

callin' me "a sour auld carle," and all sorts of gibberish as I couldn't make out what he meant.

So I says, "Maria, come 'ome this instant."

Says the old chap, "She shall see the fair, come on;" and if he didn't take 'er arm thro' 'is'n.

A lot of young fellers begun a 'ootin', and says, "Let's tak' the auld deil too;" and if they didn't seize 'old on me and drag me along.

Well, they was all smilin' and pleasant, and one on 'em says, "Come away, my leddy," that perlite, as I didn't like to make no disturbance, so went along a little way with them, for peace' sake.

They took me right down to the fair, a-pushin' every one out of the way. I didn't see no perlice nor nothink, so on I went, a-'opin' as they'd soon get tired on me; but, law, their strength was wonderful, and on they kep', till, all of a sudden, we come on some young gentlemen as 'ad been at the 'otel at Edinbro' along with us.

They says, "Mrs. Brown, whatever are you a-doin' 'ere?"

I says, "I'm 'ere ag'in my will. 'Elp!" I says.

"Let the lady alone," says one.

"Let go," say another.

"She's my grandmother," says a third.

"She ain't," I says.

Oh, the row as there was. I was pretty nigh

tore to bits, with my bonnet smashed and one shoe gone, till a perliceman come up and got me away from two fellers as was fightin' for me.

As soon as I got my breath I told the perlice what 'ad appened, as said it was all a joke, but I'd better get 'ome, and as I didn't know the way, he showed me; but I says, "Wherever is Maria?"

He says, "I don't know. No doubt she got home," as he called "hame."

I never shall forget Mrs. Lukin's screams when she see me come in all tatters and no Maria, as 'adn't turned up.

She says, "You're a wile, wicked 'ooman, to take and 'tice a young gal out and then leave 'er."

I says, "I never 'ticed 'er, it was 'er as 'ticed me, and 'ave nearly lost my life over it."

Well, jest then in come Maria, and I do believe if I 'adn't been dead beat I should 'ave struck 'er; for if she didn't say as I'd give them young men encouragements, and the young man as 'ad been one of them as met us and 'ad brought Maria 'ome, said,

"Well, Mrs. Brown, you certingly did seem to be makin' yourself quite at 'ome, a-walkin' thro' the fair that jolly with them rowdies," and the landlord as was in the room told me that no decent

fieldmale ever went near the fair, and give me quite a lecture about my behaviour in Scotland.

I could 'ave cried with wexation, only was a-dyin' for a cup of tea, and don't think as I could 'ave started the next day, only Mrs. Warein she set to work and mended up my bonnet and tidied me up afore goin' to bed; but as to that Maria Lukin, she's a deceitful 'ussey, and I'll take precious good care as I don't notice 'er no more, nor yet be led into no scrapes by her, a double-faced wiper.

I was dreadful put out, not a-knowin' what Mr. Cook might think on me, partikler as the landlord said to me as we was a-startin' that I ought to be circumspect, and that "I was no a lassie."

I was glad to get aboard the steamer, as was that crowded as you couldn't 'ardly draw your breath, let alone the river, as must 'ave been a mask of petrifaction by the ojours as it kep' a-throwin' up.

I see a lot of people a-'oldin' their noses, as is all werry well; but you can't keep it up without a-suffocat'n', and whatever it is makes it that offensive can't make out, tho' a gentleman as were Scotch and tell me all about it. But, law bless you, what with 'is talk and the espressions as he used, I couldn't make 'ead nor tail on it, except so far as he said it were gas.

"Well," I says, "if they lets the gas escape like that it's awful waste, and will find theirselves in darkness, let alone such a smell, as is enough to pison their blood, partikler on a empty stomick." For I began to feel all-overish myself, and should not 'ave knowed what to 'ave took, only Mr. Warein, like a good soul, brought me a tumbler, as I thought were milk, as is a thing I cannot take; but he says, "It ain't milk alone." Nor more it wasn't; but jest a dash of the mounting jew throwed in as took off the richness, and, I do believe, saved me from a sick bed.

It was werry pleasant a-sailin' along that river, all but for the crowds, as was all out for a holiday thro' its bein' holiday time, and as far as I could make out somethink to do with their religion, as is of the Kirk persuasion, leastways, so Mrs. Warein was a-tellin' me, as 'olds with the Baptists 'erself.

"Ah," I says, "I likes to see any one as is cheerful over their religion," and that's what the Scotch is.

A young feller as were a-settin' by bursts out a-larfin', and says "That's a good un."

I says, "Young man, I were not addressin' of myself to you, and do not require none of your laughture, as is out of place, in my werry face."

I must say as that young man were that perlite

as to 'polergise on the spot, and offered for to put down my tumbler for me, as 'ad 'eld the milk.

We was a-talkin' werry chatty, me and Mrs. Warein, when Warein came and give us warnin' to come down to breakfast with the fust bell, as we did accordin', and a lovely breakfast we got.

There was everythink as the 'art could wish, from mutton-chops to marmalade, let alone 'errin's, and trouts, and jams, and 'ams, and heggs, and toasts, and rolls, and butter, and salmon, and steaks.

"I never did," I says, "it's well as one's eyes is bigger than one's stomick, as the sayin' is, for I'm sure it would be my death to eat 'arf or a quarter of what I sees 'ere."

There was good strong tea, and the best dry toast as ever I see, not as it's a thing as I cares much about, tho' delicious butter to get it down with.

I don't think as ever I did see sich a breakfast, and I'm sure I never eat sich a one, not as ever I'll believe as that fish were caught out of that water as we'd been a-comin thro', as were strong enough to pison a whale, if he was fool enough to drink it, as no doubt 'is nat'ral instincs would warn 'im ag'in doin', tho' I 'ave 'eard say as a cow will take and pison 'erself on laurel leaves, and a pig bust 'isself

in a clover field, but they ain't fish, as no doubt makes a difference.

When breakfast was over, I got a werry pleasant seat on the deck, and never did see sich fine strawberries as Mr. Warein bought, not as fruit is a thing as I cares for, except it is in the mornin' when it eats cool, and 'ave 'eard speak of a old lady as always began the day with 'arf-a-pint of currants, and lived over a 'undred, and wouldn't 'ave died then, only they cut off her currants sudden, as give 'er constitution that shock as she never rallied from.

I was a-gettin' on famous, but thro' the sun bein' that blistery upon my back, thought I'd jest change my place, and thro' seein' of one of them camp-stools wacant on the other side, I goes and sets myself on it.

Presently I see a old thing in a black chip 'at, with a yeller face and red nose, and long black ringlets, come up and look at me 'ard; then there come up another in a black 'at, as looked like a pair of nut-crackers in the face, and a werry fat man as was in black alpaca, and a white 'at.

They all looked at me, and one of them old winegar cruets says, "It's of no use askin' 'er to give it up, she's that disgraceful old creature as created a riot in the fair last night."

I didn't make no remark, but turns the stool away from them and looks at the view, as were werry nice, and 'eard the other say, "She's a nice speciment of a tea-totaler."

Well, I couldn't stand that, so I turns on 'er sudden and says—

I says, "It's not your low, wulgar abuse behind my back as I minds, but never shall it be said as Martha Brown was aboard a steamer sailin' under false colours, for I am no tea-totaler, and never were, tho' I respects them as is give to no fomented liquors conscientious, as the sayin' is, but don't 'old with them as makes a mask on it, as a red nose will always let the cat out of the bag."

Says one of them two, "Oh, you foul-mouthed, abusive, low-lived fieldmale, to dare to insinivate as my sister's nose is thro' drink."

I says, "I didn't mean to lay 'old of your sister's nose in partikler, but," I says, "if the cap fits, let 'er wear it, in welcome."

Well, we was jest a-comin' to a landin' place, and a party took and throwed a rope ashore, as I ducked for to awoid gettin' a back'ander with it, and in so doin', forgot as I were on a camp stool, as tipped over, and I was a-goin' back'ards, so in course clutched 'old of the fust thing nigh to me, as were that 'ooman; but, law, there wasn't no support in 'er, for I pulled all 'er gethers out, and

over I went, a-draggin' 'er and the other in the black 'at with me; and there we was, all of a 'eap on the deck, with parties all a-grinnin', and no one a-tryin to pick us up.

I thought as I'd fell werry soft, and felt a somethink strugglin' under me, and when I did get up, if I 'adn't gone splosh on to the fat man in the black alpaca, as said he'd been used to helephants all 'is life, thro' bein' a missionary, as didn't bear malice, but never 'ad no idea of their weights till now.

As he meant, no doubt, for sneers at me, but I scorned to notice 'im, and was werry much surprised at them Scotch a-larfin' so 'arty, as I'd always 'eard tell as they was brought up serous.

In course I didn't go to tear that party's gethers out, nor yet to squash that missionary, as I told 'er, but she was that short and nasty as I wouldn't ask Mrs. Warein for to set 'er to rights, as would 'ave done it willin', with a needle and thread always 'andy, thro' carryin' a 'ussif with 'er, as is a thing I never did since the time as the darnin' needles broke loose in my pocket, and I set down on a row of pins, as I'd put in with the pints uppermost.

As 'ave 'ad narrer escapes that way, for another time the cork come off the end of the scissors, as I always 'ad about me, and was werry painful; so altogether I says, "No edge tools for me, as is safest when in your work-box, in my opinion, where they

can't wound nobody's feelin's, a-settin' down in a 'urry.

Them fieldmale parties made theirselves werry unpleasant all the arternoon, escept the missionary, as was werry agreeable, tho' the sun were that powerful on the back, and it was tedious work a-pickin' our way like, as we 'ad to go thro' them locks one by one, as is a 'eavy weight, and that narrer, as some parties got out and walked along the side, not as I cared for to do it, thro' bein' afraid as I might be left behind, and not 'arf a-fancyin' them boys as was a-runnin' along without no trousers on, as parties kep' a-shyin' coppers to, as encourages them in idleness, in my opinion, as did all ought to 'ave been at school, or at work, but wastes all their time a-runnin' arter them steamers, for all the world like them other gulls as will fly for miles for to pick up biscuit, as is all werry well in birds, but I do not 'old with boys bein' kep' idle like that, tho' certingly they looked 'ealthy and must 'ave 'ad the wind of a steam-enjin' to keep up as they did with their bare feet, and didn't seem for to fight nor nothink for the 'apence, but took it all in good part.

If I'd been ashore I couldn't 'ave kep' up with them 'ardly the length of my nose, not for all the coppers in this world as they could shy me.

Some werry nice young gals come and sold milk to them as fancied it, with bare feet, but remarkable tidy for all that.

I set a-watchin' all their goin's on thro' always a-likin' for to see furriners ways as is single, and some on 'em without trousers tho' growed up.

I'd plenty of time for to watch 'em and see a good deal on 'em thro' them locks bein' werry close to the shore, so as you could see them natives werry plain as is quite tame, tho' they looks wild and talked sing'ler.

I got to know 'em quite well and their 'abits, for we 'ad to get thro' a-many locks, as is the Scotch for lakes, as they're obligated for to make for to stop the water a-runnin' down 'ill too wiolent, as in course would leave the country as dry as a bone, so they locks it all in for fear it should run to waste.

Jest the same as that gal of ourn left the tap turned with the water a-comin' in, when we lived at 'Oxton, and every drop run away, as flooded the airey and the back kitchen, and 'ad to borrow six pailfuls of the neighbours, and a-goin' to wash the next day, as they durst not lend it us for fear of the New River bein' down on 'em, as is werry strict in their rates, as well they may be, 'avin' to bring it all the way from goodness knows where, as is the deep sea, in course to get it pure, as it cannot be with all them gasworks, and all manner a-flowin'

into it as kills the fish, and even dogs as 'ave drunk it may be seen a-floatin' dead that swelled, as is always the way with pison.

Not as that is so bad as the time as Jane Adley come to stop with me, and I trusted 'er with the key of the beer, for to draw a little extra, thro' Brown bein' come in late and that thirsty.

I says, "Jane, whatever you do, mind you turns it well off, that's a dear," for it was Allsop's best, as Brown 'ad fancied for summer drinkin'.

I never give the beer a thought no more, as was kep' jest inside the cellar door till the next day, in makin' of a weal and 'am pie, as Brown is partial to cold with a bit of salad. And I says to the gal, "'ave you been a-cleanin' the stove with beer," not as I thought she 'ad thro' bein' one as never cleaned anythink.

She says, "No."

"Well, then," I says, "you've been and 'ung up the jug beery, as you didn't wash out last night arter supper."

She says, "I did," rather sharp, and down she takes it, and sure enough it was as clean as a whistle, as the sayin' is.

I says, "Where can the smell of beer come from," and jest then my 'art misgive me, and I goes to the cellar, and if it wasn't a reg'lar beery pool, as that dratted Jane Adley 'ad left a-drippin'

all night, and gone off with the key in 'er pocket, so there was no stoppin' it till I sent for a new tap, as the gal would put in a-sayin' she knowed all about it thro' 'avin' lived in a public-'ouse, and let it all come out with a gush, as 'arf drownded me a-'oldin' the candle, and every drop wasted, as was fifteen shillin's the nine gallons, and only tapped for dinner the day before.

So in course I set a-watchin' them a-workin' them steamers thro' them locks, a-understandin' all about it, not as I could make out why them small locks should 'ave gates, and the big ones none at all, as was surrounded not only with 'ills but mountings all round.

I don't wonder at Queen Wictoria a-'avin' of 'er 'art in the 'ighlands, for I'm sure the livin' is downright wonderful, as is fish and soup, and jintes and pastry at every meal, and plenty of werry nice ale, as is wonderful aboard a steamer, tho' I did 'ear a stout party as was a-settin' near me complain as he'd paid 'arf-a-crown for a little bottle of that there red French wine, as I considers no better than winegar myself.

So I says, "'Owever can you espect French wines for to grow in Scotland."

"Oh," says he, "I can buy it for a shillin' the litter in Glasgow."

"Oh," I says, "that litter is no doubt rubbish,

as they gives the pigs," as put 'im out, for he turned to be a grocer as dealt in it, and were quite 'uffy, till he got a drop of whiskey and water, as seemed to settle him down a bit.

We was a good big party a-goin' along with Mr. Cook, as were like a father to every one.

I'm sure the patience he must 'ave to answer all the questions, as Jove 'imself would lose 'is temper over.

I'd 'ad a bit of a nap arter dinner, and come upon deck ag'in quite fresh, and was a-lookin' at the mountings, when I 'eard a young man say, as we was a-goin' to Obun.

I says, "You don't mean 'Igh Obun."

"Oh yes," he says, "it's 'igh enough."

But I says, "Do you mean to say as we're a-goin' all the way by sea."

"Yes," he says.

"Why," I says, "it will take us weeks to get there."

"No," he says, "we shall be there to-night."

I says, "Go along with you, a-stuffin' any one up like that," for I see as he was one of them Scotch as is always up to their larks, thro' bein' a light-'arted lot.

I says, "I knows 'Igh Obun, as is miles away, and a aunt of Brown's did once used to live opper-

site the George and Blue Boar, in the cork-cuttin' line.

So a-seein' Mr. Cook, I jest asked 'im if we should be at Obun to sleep, as told me we should, as reg'lar shet me up; but, law, when Mrs. Warein come to talk to me, I found it was the Scotch Obun, not the London Obun as we was a-goin' to, as makes all the difference, tho' both as got 'ills, tho' I've 'eard say as they're a-levellin' Obun 'Ill with a wire duck, as is easy done thro' bein' somethink to do with the telegrapht, no doubt; for if they can carry it all the way over to Merryker on a wire, why in course they can over Obun 'Ill, as is no great 'ight, but a dreadful drag for the 'osses, as did used to drop dead with a-pullin' them busses, as was loaded to the brim, as the sayin' is.

I never was more took aback when we got to Obun, as is no more like the London Obun than nothink, but reg'lar sea-side, and smelt fishy, for all the world like Margate at low water.

We got to a werry nice 'otel, a-lookin' over the sea, with tea all ready and everythink delicious, leastways as much as any one could want, partikler salmon and fresh 'errin's, as is relishin' with tea.

I must say as I was that beat as made me long for a good night's rest, so went early to my lodgin's as they'd got for me, thro' there bein' no bed in the 'otel, escept a double bed, with Maria Lukin,

as I would not stand, so said as I'd rather lodge out.

As were a respectable 'ouse a-facin' the sea, and that clean as you might 'ave eat off the boards, as the sayin' is, and a werry nice middle-aged party as were the landlady.

It was a lovely evenin', with the sun a-lookin' as if he never meant to set, as is 'is 'abits to do late in Scotland thro' bein' near the north pole, as is what he turns round upon for to make night and day, but a-feelin' 'eavy like I went to bed.

It kep' on bein' that broad daylight as go to sleep I could not, partikler thro' lovely music on the water as kep' a-floatin' like fairies with lights all 'angin' round 'em as sounded lovely, with the winder open for the 'eat, and sleep were drove out of my 'ead.

So up I gets and puts on my disshybill, as is a printed flannin and a silk 'anker round my night-cap, for to protect the 'ead, as am subject to a cold even in summer.

I stood at the winder ever so long, a-listenin' to that music, like any one in a trance, as the sayin' is, and was jest a-feelin' drowsy, when I 'eard a shriek as seemed like any one in flames; so out of the room I rushes on to the landin', and 'ears it ag'in a-comin' from a room oppersite, as I see the door were a little bit a-jar, and a bright flame.

There was a large can of water a-standin' in the corner as I ketched up, and runs into the room and see a party a-kickin' about on the bed, as I thought were a-tryin' to put 'erself out. So without more ado, I sends that can of water souse all over 'er, and in a instant felt myself seized and pitched out of the room with that wiolence as sent me a-staggerin' ag'in a party as 'ad jest come in with a 'eavy pork-mangle on 'is 'ead, as I dropped ag'in and sent 'im a-thunderin' down flop, with me arter 'im; and pitched ag'in a door as busted in with me, and there I rolled into a room where a large party was at supper, and wished as the hearth would open and swallow me, but it wouldn't.

I was that stunned like, as speak I couldn't, tho' I 'eard some say as I were mad, and others in liquor, while they rang the bell like mad, and they says to the people of the 'ouse, "Clear away that old bundle of rags."

Flesh and blood couldn't stand that; so I bounces up and says it was a mere accident, and if you 'eard the shouts of larfter as they give way to when they got a full view on me, and certingly I could not 'elp a-larfin', ketchin' sight of myself in a glass, with my nightcap off and no 'air on, for I was a awful figger.

Jest then the landlady come and led me away, a-sayin', "You'd better go to bed," and if she

didn't take and push me into my room, and went out and locked the door arter 'er.

I 'ollers out, "You leave that door unlocked, or I'll raise the parish;" but she didn't pay no attentions.

So I 'ammered away with a 'air-brush at that door till some one come and said if I didn't be quiet they'd send me to the cage.

I says, "Fetch Mr. Cook, as knows as I'm respectable."

They says, "We shan't; you be quiet, or we'll 'ave the constable."

I says, "Don't lock me in."

They says, "You ain't safe, you walks in your sleep."

I says, "I don't, and never did, but once in my life, when a-sickenin' for the measles."

On I kep' a-'ammerin', and took to ringin' the bell, till at last the door was unlocked, and a old 'ooman come in as says, "Are ye clean daft? raisin' sic a like din in a decent house."

I says, "Not a-speakin' of your langwidge, mum, I cannot explain. But," I says, "I'll leave the 'ouse."

She says, "Ye'll nae be ganging awa' the nicht."

I says, "Let me go;" and I would 'ave went, only that good soul, Mr. Cook, 'ad come out of 'is

bed, as esplained all the matter as were a mistake, all through me a-thinkin' them screams as I 'eard were fire, whereas it were only a bad tooth as the young 'ooman of the 'ouse 'ad been 'owlin' mad with for three nights, as sent for the dentist, as were the locksmith, and all in a fluster thro' bein' a young beginner, jest a-goin' to bed 'isself, and took out two at a wrench in 'is flurry, and what I took for fire was the settin' sun, as were a-goin' down round the corner that angry as looked like a change, I should say; but I never was more put out, and felt that lonely, without a soul to speak to, for the Wareins was next door in the 'otel, and she were gone to bed with a sick 'eadache, and if he'd been up I couldn't 'ave made 'im 'ear escept thro' a speakin'-trumpet, as ain't a thing for to tell your sorrors thro' to nobody partikler, not a-wantin' to let everyone know about it. So I went to bed, but kep' on a-dreamin' about fire and murder, and walkin' in my sleep, as I was quite terrified for fear as I might do, and walk out to sea, or over a pressypitch, or anythink like that, as might end fatal, the same as the young 'ooman in 'Ounsditch as throwed 'erself out of the cockloft, and was drowned in the gutter.

I don't think as a finer mornin' could 'ave shone out of the 'eavens, as the sayin' is, than when we started off by the steamer for to wisit them

islands, as isn't the same as the 'illy islands, but them as is out to sea. But a lovely mornin' it were, and everybody that cheerful, all but Mr. Warein, as 'ad been and left 'is speakin'-trumpet, as he hears thro' in the bed, as in course reg'lar shet 'im up from seein' everythink, but not a bit sulky over it, and took 'is breakfast like a lamb, as well he might, for I'm sure no pet lamb was never fed like it in this world.

Tho', talkin' of that, I never see a animal more petted than one as Mrs. Brummel, as kep' the "White 'Art," near Acton, brought up by 'and through a black teapot, as walked about quite tame with a blue ribbin round 'is neck, as proud as a Christshun, and knowed Mrs. Brummel's cap miles off when growed up and turned into the fields, and would come gallopin' up to 'er, as if she'd been his nat'ral mother, as in course 'owever should he know the difference? poor innocency!

Not as they're all that, for I've knowed 'em werry wicious even in Scotland; for one day, jest a-walkin' quiet, a old ram gave a drive at me with 'is 'orned 'ead, as sent me a-flyin' over into a lot of thistles; tho' I must say as it were my own fault a-goin' near 'im, with two young lambs a-feedin' by 'is side, as in course he'd nat'rally protect, thro' bein' 'is own flesh and blood, tho' only mutton arter all.

They do say as we was out at sea, part of the way to them islands, as they said was the same sea as you crosses in goin' to Merryker; but all as I can say is it wasn't a bit like it, and as calm as a milkpond, as the sayin' is, tho' we see whales a-flyin' about, as shows a storm.

It was a brilin' 'ot mornin', and arter breakfast I went to the ladies cabin and set there quiet on a sofy, for I was that sleepy, thro' a broken night's rest, as I felt I must 'ave a nap if I was to die for it; but jest as I were a-dozin' off a lady came down and says "We're jest there."

I says, "Oh, indeed!" not a-knowin' esactly what she did mean.

"Yes," she says, "and the boats is ready to take us ashore."

I jumps up, not a-wishin' to be left behind, and 'urries on to the deck, and there sure enough was two boats a-waitin', and parties a-gettin' into 'em.

So I waits till everyone 'ad got aboard, and then goes to the side of the wessel; but, law bless you, the boat was brim full a'ready.

They all began to say as they'd make room for me.

I says, "No, thank you," a well knowin' as if that boat were not trimmed proper, as the sayin' is, she might go over in a jiffey.

So I says, "I'll wait," and turns away, and off

they pushes; up come another boat alongside, with a old man and a boy, and one of them officers aboard the steamer says to me, "This is a bit of luck, as don't 'appen often, as there's a extra boat, so you can go arter all, as is a wonder of the world," and afore I 'ardly knowed where I were I was in that boat and off to the shore, as weren't far off, and I see were all rocks as looked dangerous; but it wasn't no use a-sayin' nothink to that man in the boat, as were a-talkin' wild-like to that boy in what they calls Garlic, leastways so a lady told me was their langwidge aboard the steamer, and I says to 'er, "Well, I only knows it by the smell, as is too much of a good thing for me;" as made 'er larf and say, "I was such a one to go on."

I never did see sich a place as they landed me on, as were all rocks, as looked shivered-like; but I see as there were a flight of wooden steps a little 'igher up, as I scrambles up to the foot on, when I 'eard some one 'oller out to me, and turnin' round, see a gent down below, as were of our party, as told me as I must come down ag'in, and keep to the right.

I says, "All right; you go on, I'll foller," not a-wantin' 'im to wait below for me a-comin' down them rocks, as is steep and werry much broke away.

So on he walks, bein' quite the gentleman, and I follers; but of all the walkin' as ever I did know

it beat it 'oller, and I don't believe as any 'uman bein', escept pre'aps a goat or a cat, as is sure-footed by natur, could 'ave walked a inch, tho' I 'ave 'eard as a helephant wont never go where it won't bear 'im, and I only wished as I'd been born a helephant.

The 'eat were awful, and I 'adn't even brought my umbreller, as would 'ave sheltered me, and 'ave been a support into the bargin, and on I went 'urryin' a bit, for them others was all disappeared.

I never was in such a fix, for climbin' and scramblin' don't suit me, thro' 'avin' 'ad the cartridge of my knee went off in the winter, so can't use both limbs that free as I did used to, was obligated to take to all fours.

I could jest see the way as them others was a-goin', and kep' on follerin' with the sun a-brilin' me between the blade-bones, and pretty nigh dead with the exertion, and if I 'adn't forgot my redicule, and so 'adn't even a smellin'-bottle with me in case I should turn faint.

'Ow ever I got along I don't know, but at last I come up to an old gent as was a-settin' on the rocks, and 'ad took 'is wig off for to wipe 'is 'ead, and down I sets too.

He says to me, "Ah, mum, you did ought to do as I've done."

I says, "What's that?" a 'opin it was a drain

out of 'is flask bottle, but turned out a total abstainer.

He says, "Bant."

So I says, "No, thank you, none of your tricks with the 'uman form for me, as comes of a corpilent family, so must espect it."

"Well," he says, "I could tell you what would make you a weazle in no time."

I says, "I don't want to be no weazle, as goes pop sometimes, tho' thin."

"Well," he says, "if you do as I tells you your figger 'd be a fairy all over."

I says, "I don't want to be a fairy, as wouldn't suit my time of life, and wouldn't be common decent, leastways, not as I've seed fairies dressed in picters."

"Well," he says, "if you'll set to and swaller your fastin' spittle reg'lar every arternoon about four o'clock, you'll 'ave a waist like a wasp in three months."

I says, "And where am I to get fastin' spittle to swaller at four o'clock in the arternoon?"

"Ah!" he says, "that's your business."

"Yes," I says, "and would soon settle my business pretty quick, or anyone's else's, as fasted till four o'clock."

Jest then I 'eard sounds as was werry mournful singin', and seemed to come out of the rocks, so I

gets up and clambers a bit further, and comes to where there was a cave like, with the sea a-runnin' into it.

"Come on," says a party as soon as he see me, "you're jest in time for the Natural Anthum," and he 'olds out 'is 'and and 'elps me down them rocks, till we come to a part where there was a rope for to 'old by whilst you got into that 'ere cave, as they said belonged to a party in the name of Fingull.

I says, "He don't live 'ere, I 'ope, as is a lonesome spot, and must be damp in winter, I should say."

Jest as I was a-talkin' one of them parties says to me, "Jump across," but afore I could move, up come a wave slap, and reg'lar drenched me over my knees.

I says, "Bother your caves, and Mr. Fingull too, a-'avin' the place in such a disgraceful state, and a-chargin' people for to see it, as I know'd was a pound by the steamer there and back." I says, "I don't want to see no more of 'im nor 'is cave neither, but will go back to the steamer at once," and up the rocks I scrambles ag'in reg'lar drippin'.

It's all werry well to say as sea-water don't give you cold, but it ain't by no means pleasant to 'ave your boots full on it, and every step you takes a squash.

So findin' as I couldn't get on I clombe up ever

so 'igh on them rocks out of sight, where I see a shady spot for to take off my boots and stockin's, so as to dry 'em in the sun, and 'ad reg'lar to wring the tail of my gownd out.

I don't think as ever I know'd what tiredness was, as no doubt were owin' to the open air, and I reg'lar sunk down 'elpless, and must 'ave gone off dead asleep in a instant.

'Ow long I slep' goodness knows, but when I did wake up, I found as the sun 'ad gone in, and the weather 'ad changed a good deal to cloudy. I looks round for the steamer as were not visible nowheres, and I thought 'ad pre'aps jest gone round the corner, so I struggles on my stockin's and boots, and down the rocks I goes, more settin' and slidin' than walkin', for they was that steep I couldn't keep my feet, and tore my dress dreadful, and when I got to the bottom there wasn't no boat nor nothink, nor nobody to be seen nowheres.

Oh, it give me sich a turn. I says, "Goodness gracious, if I should turn out to be a reg'lar Robinson Cruiser on a undiscovered island," with no 'uman 'abitation nor nothink but some steps and a flagstaff, as looked to me like the end of the world for loneliness. What to do I didn't know; it wasn't no use a-'ollerin', and I 'adn't my umbreller to tie my 'ankercher to, for to make no signals of distress with, as is what is done at sea.

I says, "It serves you right, Martha Brown, for a-leavin' a good 'ome and a kind 'usban' for any escursions as ever were born or thought on;" but I says, "it's a awful end for to be left to die solingtary, and 'ow Mr. Cook could 'ave the 'art to do it; as shall no doubt be dewoured by sea gulls," as 'ad scented me out, and was all screamin' round me.

I was thinkin' 'ow I could support life longest, as there wasn't no 'ope of ketchin' no fish, and couldn't eat it raw if I did.

I 'ave 'eard speak of a party as were shipwrecked and lived three weeks on 'is flannin waistcoat, but then he was French, as is such wonderful cooks, as can make a dinner out of a old shoe, I've 'eard say, and send up leather breeches stewed that delicate as nobody couldn't tell it from tripe.

I was a-thinkin' whatever would become on me, and 'ad got up on the 'igh ground ag'in as nearly twisted both my ancles, and tore my gownd to ribbins, and was a-lookin' out, when I see a boat and two creeturs in it.

I wasn't sure as they mightn't be natives, and pre'aps not to be trusted, but life is sweet, so I takes off my bonnet and waives it about, and 'ollers like mad.

It was ever so long afore they see me, as they did at last, and rowed to the place where I'd fust

landed, and if it wasn't the same old man and boy as 'ad brought me from the steamer.

I says, "My good soul, wherever is Mr. Cook and the steamer, and every one gone to?"

He spoke werry sing'ler with a grin like, and said as they was "A-war."

I says, "War or no war, take me to 'em."

He said, as far as I could make out, "As they was all gone."

"What!" I says, "and left me behind on this dissolute spot, as ain't fit for no one but sea-'orses, and sich like to live on?"

He did not say much, but pulls me into the boat more dead than alive.

I says, "Wherever will you take me to?"

He pints over somewheres, and pulls away, and then arter a bit it begun to rain like mad, and then they put up a sail, and on we went ever so long drippin' wet, till at last I see some smoke a-comin' up, as showed us 'uman bein's was nigh, and wasn't I glad for to see that boat when pushed ashore, and out they 'elped me. It was a wild sort of a lookin' place, with a lot of 'arf-naked children, as come and offered me pebbles and asked for pennies, as is all as they can say, as shows 'ow clever the Scotch is.

It was a inhabited place, with a few cottages, and one on 'em a 'otel as were wonderful comfortable and tidy considerin'.

It's lucky as I'd got money, for I 'ad to pay for that boat, not as it would 'ave mattered, for when I told 'em as I were one of Mr. Cook's friends, they was quite glad to see me, and the old lady at the 'otel made me a cup of tea, with a 'errin', and got me to bed, as was all werry well, but thro' bein' one of them as shets up like a cupboard was rather stifley, and me that low sperrited, as sleep I could not for ever so long.

When I did get to sleep, I dreamnt as I were Robinson Cruiser, a-tryin' to swarm up that flag-staff and fallin' over rocks into the sea.

I was that stiff and chilly the next day as the old lady made me stop in bed, and give me a drop of werry nice broth, and there I stopped till evenin', for they'd made my mind at ease about where I was, a-sayin' as the steamer would come ag'in on Monday, as the name on it were Iowner, as is a unin-'abited island all but a werry few, tho' once a grand place, as is aperient by the churches, as tho' now in ruins, must 'ave been a large parish.

They told me as it was where the old Scotch kings did used to come to be berried in peace, as is a nice quiet spot for the purpose, but no doubt too full at last, the same as Stepney Churchyard, so 'ad to be took to the simmyterries.

I must say as it's disgraceful the way as that church wants repairs, and quite as bad as them

Gypshun temples up the Nile, not as the Scotch ever uses it now, thro' bein' a different persuasion, and not 'avin' no more kings to berry, as is pre'aps as well, for they was werry much given to murderin' 'em, as wasn't pleasant for them kings.

I don't know as Mr. Cook come from them parts, but every one seemed to look up to 'im werry much, and said as he'd been werry kind in 'elpin' the poor people for to get fishin'-boats, as is what they lives on; but there can't be much made out of it, for I don't see who is to buy the fish escept what they salts, as is a thing as a little on goes a great way with me, thro' a-creatin' that dreadful thust, as is, I suppose, the fish a-cravin' for its native water.

It was werry interestin' a-goin' to look over them ruins as I did on Monday, tho' far from comfortable thro' not 'avin' no change of clothes.

It's sin'gler 'owever them monks as built the church should 'ave come to sich a out-of-the-way place, as don't seem to lead to nowhere, and as to where they come from, nobody don't seem to know.

It was all werry well a-lookin' at that old ancient place, but I wasn't sorry when I 'eard 'em say as the steamer were a-comin' and glad I was to get aboard it.

The capting he told me as it wasn't never found out as I were a-missin' till they got back to Obun,

thro' a-thinkin' I was 'avin' a nap, and as Mr. Cook were pretty nigh besides 'isself, as I'm sure he would be thro' bein' a feelin' 'art, but he'd made it all square for me aboard that steamer, as I stopped in the ladies cabin ontil we got back to Obun, for I was not fit to be seen, till I'd got to my luggage, so as to tidy myself up a bit.

I found a note at Obun from Mr. Cook, a-sayin' as he couldn't wait, but 'oped to see me in Edinbro', and there was a letter from Brown as said he was a-goin' on to Inverness. So there wasn't nothink for it but for me to get a good night's rest in Obun, and get on next day to Inverness as best I could, for I quite longed to see Brown again.

I were not sorry for to get away from Obun tho' a sweet spot, for I felt lonesome like tho' there was plenty aboard that steamer, as all 'ad come to take towers in the 'ighlands, as there is certingly plenty on all about tho' mostly ruins, as them Scotch seems to 'ave took a pleasure in burnin' one another out of 'ouse and 'ome, as ain't a neighbourly action in my opinion, tho' preaps not done on purpose.

I was a-enjoyin' myself werry much aboard the steamer, as know'd Mr. Cook werry well, and treated me quite like the lady.

The capting he says to me, "Ye'll be gangin' thro' the glen?"

I says, "In course," not a-knowin' what he meant, and didn't say no more till the steamer stopped, and every one went ashore.

I says, "Whatever is up?"

They says, "We're a-goin' to see the Massacree of Glencoe."

I says, "Then I'll stop 'ere, as I don't want to see sich a sight, as I've 'eard say as sometimes they drives them poor deers into a corner and slaughters 'em."

"Oh," says a young gent, "it took place many years ago," and went on to tell me 'ow William the Conqueror 'ad 'ad thousands killed in their beds on that werry spot, as 'ad received 'im friendly in the middle of the night, down to the babby in arms.

"Then," I says, "he was a cold-blooded willin, and deserved 'angin'."

"Oh," says a gentleman, "he was our Dutch deliverer."

I said, "Was he, indeed?"

"Then all as I've got to say is, as I'm glad I didn't 'ave none of 'is deliverances, a butcher as deserved 'angin' quite as much as the feller as committed the Mars murder, with the baby in the cradle."

"Ah," says a gentleman, "one murder makes a felon, but ten thousand a Nero."

"Ah," I says, "I've 'eard tell of 'im as was a

nice blackguard, as I see the picter on 'im myself in the Great Exhibition, in a white cloak, and flowers in 'is 'air, a-walkin' over the dead bodies, a-chucklin' as he'd 'ad murdered, jest for lark, a blood thirsty wretch," not as ever I 'eard as he were Dutch afore.

I'd 'arf a mind not to go and see that place, but as they was all a-goin' I didn't like bein' left behind.

They got me up on a werry nice back seat of a coach, with a ladder, so as to see the view; and a werry pleasant drive we 'ad thro' a large slate place, as is what all the rocks is made on all round, and precious black they looks, tho' lovely flowers, partikler roses, in full bloom.

I must say as that Glencoe looks like a place for a murder, jest as if a cuss 'ung over it, as I'm sure did ought over them as ordered that massacree as two gentlemen got a-arguin' about, one of 'em a-sayin' as it were all a mistake, and as the king signed the order without knowin' what it were, thro' bein' a Dutchman.

Then I says, "He did ought to 'ave 'ad 'is 'ead chopped off on the spot, for doin' such a thing as might be the end of the world pretty soon if things was to go on like that," not as I believes as any body as can read, even the Dutch, ever signs anythink unbeknown, unless in liquor, as most likely

that king were, for we all knows as the Dutch is topers to drink, and might 'ave been 'ocussed just the same as poor old Mrs. Huskisson, as 'ad 'er bottled porter drugged at supper by 'er two sons-in-law, and signed away the brew'ouse and 'arf the business, unbeknown for them to run thro' with horse-racin' in six months, and brought to the Aged Pilgrims, where she died of the dropsy afore the year was out, as broke 'er 'art, thro' never 'avin' knowed want, as comes 'ard upon you in the evenin' of your days, as the sayin' is.

I always 'ad a misgivin' about that ere Glencoe, and I'm sure it's a mercy as it didn't turn out a massacree for me, for when we'd got to the middle on it, as the coaches stopped at, and we all got down, leastways I was a-goin' to, but a-'esitatin' on the wheel, when a stout-lookin' chap says, "Come on, I'll ketch thee," and holds out 'is arms.

I says, "I can't jump."

He says, "Jest drop, that's all."

Well, in course I thought he know'd 'is way about, and give a spring at 'im like, thro' its bein' no 'ight, and if I didn't send 'im a-flyin' back'ards into the ditch, as it was lucky were behind 'im, and not a stone wall, as must 'ave smashed 'im.

I fell soft myself on the bank, as is mossy; and glad I was to get a drink of ale, as refreshed me wonderful, and is sold by parties at the roadside.

Every one walked on for to see the view, as I didn't care about, but wandered down-'ill to where there was runnin' water; for it was all a wild rocky part, with 'igh mountings, and in a 'ole up one side of a 'igh rock, there was a cave as a party in the name of Osshun once lived in, but 'owever he got up to it I can't think, unless he lived in them times when 'uman bein's had wings, as were afore the flood, no doubt, and no balloons about.

Well, I was a-walkin' on a-thinkin' of all manner when I 'eard a snort, and up I looks and see a little black beast, with short 'orns and a shaggy coat, as were a somethink between a goat and a cow, I should say, as were a-comin' at me full butt with 'is 'orns.

I couldn't believe as he was in earnest at fust, but I soon see as he meant mischief, so I takes to my 'eels, and makes for a low wall as I see close by, as I managed for to bound like a grey'ound; but, law, that 'ere wicious brute come arter me full tilt, and, no doubt, would 'ave been over the wall too, only I put up my umbreller sudden in 'is face, as seemed to reg'lar scarify 'im, and jest then I 'eard a 'ollerin', and a dog a-barkin', as made 'im lewant, tho' they was only a-callin' arter me, as they was all a-gettin' on the coaches ag'in, so I 'ad to 'urry, and 'ard work it was for me to get up into my seat, for I was in sich a trimble thro' that nasty beast, I

do think I should 'ave dropped, only a gentleman gave me a little drop, as I 'adn't the strength to pour out for myself, as brought the life into me ag'in.

I 'oped as my troubles in Glencoe was over, but far from it, for as we was a-drivin' along the road, we met a coach-load a-comin' the other way, as passed us in a narrer part, and their back seat ketched the back seat as I were on in passin' too close, and reg'lar wrenched it off.

I thought it was all over with me, and so it was as far as that seat went, for down I come, and it's a mercy as I fell gradual, and the last coach too, or I might 'ave been killed with the shock, or run over on the spot, as is where a many 'ave lost their lives no doubt.

I wasn't much 'urt when they got me up ag'in in front, tho' I was glad to get aboard the steamer ag'in, for the fall had dislodged my teeth, and I couldn't speak plain, as made one lady think as I'd 'ad a fit, and called to a gent as were medicinal, as come to me werry kind, but I only shook my 'ead, as made 'im think I were offended, as I esplained arterwards, and to 'is good lady, as were like a sister all the way, and looked quite a gal, tho' she told me she'd been married thirty years, but no doubt it was thro' bein' a cheerful disposition, and a kind 'art, and a 'usban' as was full of 'is fun, and

as fond on 'er as tho' only the 'oney moon. There was some of the party as 'adn't been long married, but didn't go on no foolishness as I 'ave know'd newly-married parties; and there was some young gentlemen as was brim full of their fun, and says to me, "Mrs. Brown, in course you'll pay old Ben a visit."

I says, "Not if it's any larks with the old gent," as do not 'old with liberties bein' took with elders, as is our betters.

"Oh," says one, "he espects wisitors to pay their respects to 'im."

"Then," I says, "I'm there."

Them young fellers went off a-larfin', and nothink more weren't said till we got to a place as they calls Banna Wee, as is the Scotch for little, I knows.

It is a beautiful 'otel, and Mr. Cook he'd bespoke a bed for me, and all was werry nice, partikler the dinner, as I were a-enjoyin' when I see them young gentlemen all get up, and one says to me, "Now, Mrs. Brown, are you ready for a start?"

I says, "Where?"

He says, "Up Ben Nevis."

I says, "Whatever do you mean?"

He says, "Old Ben, as you said you'd wisit up there," and pints to the mountings.

I says, "If he lives up there, you may give 'im my 'umble dooty and say as my legs ain't as young as they was, and he'll feel for me."

But, law bless you, they thought I were serious a-goin' up that mounting, and 'ad a guide all ready, and said they'd be up in time to see the sun set.

"Well," I says, "I've seen 'im set werry well from level ground, quite good enough for me, and as to goin' a-rushin' up mountings arter old Bens, Brown would think me downright mad, let alone my knee, as is my ticklish point now-a-days, ever since that 'ere cartridge went off."

We 'ad a lovely evenin' a-walkin' about that Banna Wee, and some werry nice gents as 'ad come for fishin' made theirselves werry pleasant, tho' they was a-arguin' with a party about them whales as we'd see two days afore, for there was a gent at Banna Wee as 'ad see me that time as I were on that rocky island as 'adn't gone no further with Mr. Cook thro' 'avin' 'urt 'is ancle as were 'is own fault thro' a-jumpin' off the steamer too quick.

He said as they was whales as we'd see, and the others rediculed the idea, a-sayin' as they was purposes.

I says, "I 'ave see a whale myself in goin' to Merryker."

"Yes," says one gent; "but that ain't nothink to the purpose."

I says, "Escuse me, sir, you means as the purpose ain't nothink to the whale, as is a deal smaller, and 'ave seen them a-playin' myself in the Thames like black pigs in shoals."

So they all larfs 'arty as changed the subject, but proved to be whales arter all, as I see in the papers only the other day as they'd been all caught, and would be a nice penny in some one's pocket.

Not as I can think whatever can be the use of whales as is only train ile, now gas 'ave come in as did used to be the parish lamps and give a miserable light, and of all the stuff to smell it's the werry wust, for I well remembers 'earin' of a lady of title as 'ad a 'lumination star fall over 'er as was all red and green lamps, and drenched 'er to the skin at Wox-'all when the 'lied sufferins was there along with the Duke of Wellin'ton, as smelt that dreadful as nobody couldn't bear it, and were obligated to be sent 'ome in a 'ackney coach alone, settin' on the straw at the bottom, and everythink on 'ad to be burnt from a 'at and feathers downwards.

We started early from Banna Wee, and them young gents as 'ad been up the mounting was full of it, as must 'ave been a tough job, partikler the comin' down as were a breakneck job thro' the guide a-keepin' up full gallop all the way. As of course were used to it, and wanted to get to bed.

All as they complained on was not a-gettin' a

cup of tea when they got back, as the parties at the 'otel wouldn't give 'em, as is a refreshin' thing, and only a little bilin' water arter all; as ain't no great trouble, tho' it was 'alf-past eleven when they got back.

I'm sure I'd 'ave got up and made 'em one myself with pleasure, as was better for 'em than beer and sperrits, and I do like young people for to be encouraged in doin' them plucky things, not as they was all young, for there was one party as were well on in life, he went up that mounting with his son and no guide nor nothink, just as cool as a lettice, as the sayin' is.

It's werry pleasant a-goin' along that ere Caledonian Canal as makes it a short cut up to them 'ighlands, but 'owever we could keep on a-goin' up 'ill by water is more than I can make out, tho' one gent did tell me it was all thro' the locks as opens one arter another, but I'm sure they're level enough.

We got to Inverness early in the day, and 'ad 'ad a pleasant party enough all, but some old stuck-up things, as was three sisters, and one on 'em thro' avin' a dreadful 'eadache were arterwards thankful for my smellin' salts, not as she deserved 'em, thro' bein' that rude to me at one place where there were a omblibus to take us from the steamer to the 'otel.

I was jest a-gettin' in, as they'd got in afore me, and one on 'em says, "There's no room."

Her bags and things was layin' on the seat, she says, "I want this place for my things."

I says, "If you don't want 'em set on, you'd better move 'em," as would 'ave soon 'ave squashed 'em as 'ave looked at 'er.

She ketched 'em up, a-seein' as I were in earnest, and jest then the 'orses begun to back.

I says, "I 'ope as they won't go and back us into the canal, the same as they did at Dublin."

"Let me out," says the old gal, in a fright.

I knowed she couldn't get past me, so set as firm as a rock, thro' there bein' no danger. I says, "You needn't be afraid."

She says, "Don't address me," and then a-turnin' to the others, she says, "Ladies will be obligated to stop at 'ome, for these wulgar escursionists quite ruin the place."

I says, "I'm sure your fit to travel then, if ladies did ought to stop at 'ome," and that shet 'er up.

I didn't see 'er no more that evenin' arter she got out of the bus, as proved 'er to be no lady, for thro' bein' old, she couldn't get out without a struggle, and a gentleman, as was a-standin' by, offered 'er is 'and to 'elp 'er down, and she drawed back, and give 'im a look, as if he'd insulted 'er gross.

The next day aboard the steamer I see my lady quite done up, a-layin' on a seat, lookin' that bad, that I offered one of 'er friends my smellin' salts, as was that grateful, and begun to talk werry friendly to me, but said as they'd been werry much put out by not bein' able to find room at a 'otel two days afore, thro' Mr. Cook havin' took up all the beds for 'is party, and 'ad been forced to a shake-down on the floor.

I says, "And why not, in course if Mr. Cook brings a party of five thousand into Scotland, as he 'ave done, he must find 'em beds, as he always do, and would if they was fifty thousand, and a werry good thing too for Scotland; and I'm sure as you don't begrudge people a pleasant 'oliday on reasonable terms."

"No," she said, "as she didn't, but it was werry ill convenient."

"Yes," I says, "that's the way of the world, but," I says, "I 'ave 'eard say as it is the best plan for to write before, and when you wants beds," as in course is common sense and only reasonable as it should be, fust come fust served, tho' sometimes nothink but a double-bedded room, as I 'ad to take myself at one place, and never 'ad sich a shock never before nor since, tho' not any fault of mine, nor yet any one's else's, as it turned out.

For I'd gone to bed early and 'adn't locked my

door through a-knowin' as a lady were a-goin' to take the other bed.

I'm one of them as when I've 'ad my sleep wakes up quite fresh like, and early, and so I did that next mornin', jest as the sun come a-blazin' thro' the curtings.

Of all the snores as ever I did 'ear, they was a-comin' from that other bed, as made me set up in mine for to 'ave a good look at that snorer.

You might 'ave knocked me down with a feather, as the sayin' is, for if in the other bed there wasn't a-layin' a old man with 'is 'ead tied up in a wusted nightcap.

I didn't know whatever to do, for there wasn't no bell at the bed 'ead, and I'd sooner 'ave died than 'ave got out of bed, as would 'ave pre'aps woke the old beast up.

Jest then I see as he was a-gettin' restless, so I crouches down ag'in, and covers my 'ead nearly over with the sheet, for to watch 'im and see 'im put out 'is 'and and take his snuff-box off a chair by the bedside and take a pinch of snuff as seemed to rouse 'im thorough, and I thought he was a-goin' to get out of bed.

So jest then I 'eard a step; and 'ollers, "'elp, murder, fire, thieves," as loud as ever I could, and into the room come a couple of men all of a bustle.

I 'ad my 'ead under the sheet all but a eye, and

I says, "Send for the perlice, and 'ave 'im took up, a willin."

Then I heard some one say, "Oh, you bold, shameless old 'ussey, to call men into the room like that."

I says, "Take that feller out of the bed."

They says, "What bed? There ain't no feller in no bed, as we can see."

I says, "He is, he's in the other bed."

I 'adn't 'ardly got the words out when I felt drenched, as made me jump up, and there was that old wretch in the wusted nightcap a-standin' there, with a plaid shawl on, and the water jug as 'ad been emptied all over me.

I says, "You willin, 'ow dare you," still thinkin' it were a man.

"Who are ye callin' willin, as am as 'onest a woman as yoursell?" And if it wasn't a old Scotch woman, as were the 'ardest, boniest face as ever I see, but proved a good soul, and larfed 'arty at my mistake, and didn't throw the water over me in no spite, but thought as I'd got the 'sterrics, as cold water certingly is the best for, and brought Mrs. Chumley out on thro' the werry sight of the jug, as 'er 'usban' was a-goin' to throw over 'er, jest dressed for Gravesend, and a-goin' off in a pet 'cos he would go by rail, when she was mad for the boat, thro' always bein' one to show off, and wanted to dance

on the deck, as he didn't 'old with, and right too, as is all werry well for gals, but don't become the mother of a family, as did ought to be more partikler in their ways.

I don't know as ever I were more pleased in my born days as in gettin' to Inverness, for there stood Brown, a-waitin' for me, as were that sunburnt, as he looked for all the world like a 'aymaker.

He'd been and got there the night afore, and was a-stoppin' along with friends of 'is'n in the name of McDoodle, as was engineers, and that glad to see me as if I'd been their own flesh and blood, as is cousins to everybody in Scotland, and a pretty 'ouse, not like most on 'em, built on the flat, but a 'igh roof, as Mrs. McDoodle told me was a self-contained 'ouse, as they'd bought the few on.

I says, "Oh, indeed, I suppose it was a lot."

She says, "No; only one."

I says, "Ah!" not a-knowin' what she meant by buyin' a few, if there was only one, but tho' I didn't like to ask 'er, I 'eard arterwards were Scotch for lease. As they do use sing'ler espressions; for that first day as we was there they asked me if I'd like "a few broth," as meant "a good deal," for they filled my plate, and somethink like broth too, with lots of meat in it, and delicious fresh wegetables and pearl-barley.

We stopped along with them McDoodles two

days for to rest me, and 'ad a 'appy time, all but for me a-makin' a mistake, as might 'ave scalded me to death. For we was all a-settin' down to dinner, and a dish were put oppersite me, as looked for all the world like a meat puddin'.

So, says Mr. McDoodle to me as he'd lay me a wager I couldn't carve it without a-splashin' it all over the cloth.

I says, "That's a thing as I never does, except when anythink is put on too small a dish."

He says, "You've cut one afore, then."

"Law," I says, "scores of times."

"Oh, then," he says, "you knows the joke," leastways he said "ken," as is the Scotch for know.

I says, "I should say I did," and without more ado I sticks my knife into that puddin', and squash, out it gushed all over me like the flood-gates a-givin' way.

I never was so drownded; and as to old McSnuffy as is Mrs. McDoodle's father, werry infirm and set next me, he was a-drippin' from 'ead to foot, and 'is eye as he can see out on bunged up with the beastly thing as is what they calls a 'aggis.

Goodness knows what it's made on, I don't; but of all the over-blowed bustin' dishes as ever I see, it beat 'em 'oller.

Mrs. McDoodle was dreadful put out with 'er 'usban' for givin' it me to carve, a-thinkin' as he'd

gone to play me a trick; but certingly it were not 'is fault nor mine neither, as took it for a puddin' and not a bag of offal, as is what it is in plain English, whatever they may call it in Scotch.

But, law, we was all werry jolly, and 'ad a pleasant arternoon, a-singin' of songs and a-tellin' of old nannygoats as they're full on up there thro' bein' shepherds, and lovely sheep too, let alone the mutton, for their wool is that fine it makes them lovely plaids as they calls 'em as I got a gownd on myself, as is a werry good dress for them as 'ave to set on them damp rocks as strikes cold to the constitution.

We 'ad some lovely singin' in the evenin' as is werry beautiful, not as I could understand all the words of some on 'em; there was one young gal sung a song about a party in the name of Robin Gray, as were a old fool as went and got a young gal to marry 'im thro' distress 'cos 'er parents 'ad 'ad great misfortunes in losin' their cow, and 'er all the time in love with a young sailor.

So I says as I didn't 'old with that song, and I says if she is wretched it serves 'er right.

They says to me "Why?"

I says, "What right 'ad she to marry that old feller with 'er 'art on the sea?"

"Oh," they says, "to save 'er parents from ruin."

I says, "She'd better 'ave gone to the work-'ouse with 'em, as they'd 'ave wished 'er to if they'd been true-'arted people." They was all ag'in me, but I says, "If she'd been a child of mine I'd rather 'ave see 'er dead than wife to a old beast like that, as if he'd been a true man would 'ave fed 'er father and mother too, and not 'ave wanted a gal to be 'is wife as must 'ave downright loathed the sight on 'im, and the sailor not dead arter all."

A young gal as was there when she wished me good-night, said "Thank you, Mrs. Brown." When they was all gone, old McDoodle said "I'm right glad you spoke as you did, tho' I didn't like to side with you for fear of givin' offence, for there's old McClarty as wants 'is gal as is jest seventeen to marry 'is landlord as is sixty-eight, jest to get 'is lease renewed." And glad I was to 'ear arterwards as that young gal made a bolt on it with a young feller as she loved.

For tho' I'm not one ever to 'old up young people in disobeyin' their parents, yet parents did not ought for to try and sell their children, as they would cattle or negro blacks.

I never was so took aback in my life, as I were a-walkin' by the river side one mornin' and see a lot of gals and women all a-washin', with their legs that bare as is downright scandalous.

In course we all knows as women 'ave got legs,

but they was never intended to be used for washin' like that with; but in course it's nothink when you're used to it, the same as them kilts, as looks werry sing'ler to the naked eye, but don't mean no 'arm, no more than the washin', tho' both looks bold, partikler in a fieldmale; tho' I wonders them washerwomen don't wear kilts altogether, as wouldn't be in the way, and save the trouble of tuckin' up their gownds, nor run into so much stuff.

It was werry 'ard work for me and Brown to get away from them McDoodles, as was a jolly lot; but we was obligated for to go thro' Brown 'avin' some friends as he was a-goin' to, near where Queen Wictoria lives, as well as 'avin' to see a party at a place called Dunkeld.

We started off by a early train, and 'ad werry pleasant parties with us.

Some on 'em 'ad been a-stayin' at a temperance 'otel, as is called Waverley, arter one of Shakespeare's plays; leastways so one young man said in the train, as was full of his spoutin', and I think was a play-actor, by 'is ways and long 'air, werry curly, as didn't know much about a brush and comb, tho' lots of grease.

He was full of the Waverley, thro' bein' one of the Band of 'Ope growed up, as 'ad lectured many thousand times, he said, on temperance.

Another young man as 'ad stopped at the U ion,

as is strength, as the sayin' is, and not temperance, got a-charfin' 'im, and said as he'd 'ad a splendid glass of whiskey afore startin'.

I must say, as I do think, with a little new milk it's a fine thing ag'in the mornin' air on the empty stomick, as must strike cold jest out of bed, and took it myself, leastways Mr. McDoodle forced me to.

It certingly is werry wild all the way along from Inverness, and that young 'Opeful, as they called the lecturer, he kep' a-goin' on about the battle-field as we passed over, where they do say as a feller, as they called Duke of Cumberland, 'ad all the wounded butchered in cold blood, the day arter the battle.

I says, "I don't believe it, as any English duke, 'owever angry, would do it."

Says one, "But he did tho'."

Says another, "He wasn't English at all, but only a German."

"Oh!" I says, "then that makes all the difference, 'cos some of them German dukes is downright tyrants."

"But it come 'ome to 'im," says another; "for tho' he was werry brave in killin' the wounded, but turned tail ag'in the French in battle, and give into 'em, and died in disgrace thro' bein' proved a coward, as 'is own father called 'im to 'is face, and

that's why I considers," says that gentleman, "as 'is statty did not ought to be put up ag'in in Scavenger's Square, and wrote to the papers."

I says, "Jest the place for such a ruffian."

"No," says the gentleman, "the dunghill's the place for 'im."

They showed us the place as we went along where Queen Wictoria 'ad to dine by the road side off two chickens as were that tough she couldn't eat 'em.

"Ah," I says, "if I were Queen Wictoria, I'd never travel without a good 'amper at the back of the carriage, like parties takes to the Darby."

Well, that young play-actin' party, he busts out sudden a-sayin' as 'is name were Norval on the Grampian 'ills, and felt inspired at the sight on 'em.

I says, "Then if you lives about 'ere, sir, pre'aps you can tell me where a party lived as I've 'eard tell about as met three witches on a 'eath, as told 'im he should be king 'ereafter."

"Ah," he says, a-startin'; "Glamis thou art. Cawdor thou art."

I says, "Oh, dear no. My name is Brown, and afore that Graves, as is changed now thro' my mother a-marryin' ag'in in the name of Falkner."

He didn't make no remark, but said after a bit,

"'Ad he not looked so like my father as he slep', I myself 'ad done it."

It give me sich a turn, for he was a-settin' next to Brown as were fast asleep, as was most of the others.

So I says, "I must beg as you won't go to disturb my good gentleman, as is a light sleeper."

He only says, a-lookin' at me wild, "She should 'ave died 'ereafter."

I was that terrified, a-feelin' sure he was a lunatic as 'ad broke loose from somewheres, so I give Brown a kick and woke 'im, and it was quite a 'appy release when the train stopped and woke up everybody else.

We 'ad a lovely walk thro' a place as they called Killy Cranky, and I should say as any one as were Cranky did not ought to be trusted there alone, as is a wild rocky spot, with a river a-runnin' thro' it like mad, so if you was to fall over the rocks, you'd be drownded to a dead certainty, as is the only thing as is a certainty in this life.

There's a place where a party in the name of Dundee were shot at a-drinkin' fountain, as that young spoutin' feller kep' on a-singin' about to me, as we went along, for he would stick to me all the way.

I says, "That's 'im, then, I suppose, as inwented the marmalade, as I've seen the name on the pots;"

but I says, "I 'adn't no idea as they'd inwented them drinkin' fountings so long ago, and is quite new in London, as I don't 'old with drinkin' at myself, as 'ave 'eard speak of parties gettin' a sore mouth, but never of any one bein' shot; tho' pre'aps he were dry rubbish as may be shot anywheres."

"Oh," he says, "he wasn't no rubbish, but a reg'lar gentleman, as kep' 'is word to 'is king and country."

Then I says, "I 'oners 'im for it."

Well, that young man would go on so a-spoutin' close ag'in the 'edge, that at last I says to 'im, "Would you be so good as to give me your arm," for I really were afraid as he'd go and dash 'isself over the rocks.

He was werry perlite a-givin' of me 'is arm afore my face, but I 'eard 'im say arterwards, when he didn't think as I was nigh, "that he'd 'ad a nice job a-towin' a old seventy-four thro' the glen, as 'ad nearly tore 'is arm out."

I 'eard 'im say it when I was a-settin' in a pretty garden behind a tree, at the place where we dined, as is called Pitlockry, a lovely spot, and sich a nice 'otel, as I says to Brown, as I should like to stop at, as lots of parties does, as is like a quiet 'ome, with lovely views all round, where parties is took in by the week.

Brown, he says, "Ah, some day," only we 'adn't got time then.

Brown kep' a-'urryin' on werry unpatient, as put me out with 'im, not as I were altogether pleased with 'im at Inverness a-makin' jokes about me bein' lost, a-sayin' as I were like a bad penny, sure to turn up, as I says is a bad comparison, afore the Scotch too, as can't a-bear a bad penny, and is sich 'usban's, and takes a pride in their wives, tho' they do let 'em wash by the river side, and even work in the fields, but it's their wild ways, the same as wearin' no shoes and stockin's, as many on 'em can't a-bear to put on, tho' a bad thing for to go without, as spreads the foot, and tho' it may keep off corns, I'm sure brings on bunions.

We got on to Dunkeld for to sleep, as belongs to the Duke of Athole, as inwented that brose as is nearly all whiskey.

He's got a noble place, tho' it don't look like a 'uman 'abitation, tho' lovely grounds with a 'ermit's cave, full of lookin'-glasses as showed the water, but werry up-'ill work in 'ot weather; besides I wanted to rest, for we was a-goin' to a 'ighland show, as were a long coach journey, thro' there bein' no railway up there, as is what Queen Wictoria likes to keep 'er place quiet, as is 'er 'appy 'ome; but a tremenjous journey for 'er, tho' always done in 'er sleep, I've 'eard say.

We 'ad a werry pretty ride, as was quite a treat arter them railways, as nearly joggles me to death, let alone the dust, as is pisonous.

We was a-goin' to stop with friends, as is as well in Scotland sometimes; for the 'otels is that crowded that the fust quality 'ave been knowed to be obliged for to sleep in their coaches, and I did 'ear as a 'ole lot was give a night's rest in the Catholic Church, as was a Christian act, any'ow, tho' not a place as I should care for to sleep in, as is nearly all ruins all over Scotland, with no roofs nor winders.

I says to Brown, "Whenever shall we overtake Mr. Cook?" 'Cos I 'adn't 'eard a word about Mrs. Warein, as made me that anxious, partikler as I found as I'd put Warein's speakin'-trumpet into my redicule, in the 'urry of comin' away from Obun that mornin', as 'ad left it on the breakfast table, and me a-thinkin' they was gone aboard the boat, took 'em up, a-intendin' to give 'im them, and forgot all about it, as was werry stupid of me, no doubt, for I 'eard 'im say as he'd been and left 'is flexible under the piller; but I'm sure 'e's as well without it, for, poor soul, it's a downright misery to 'im the way as people will come and roar into it, the same as one man did aboard the steamer, a-comin' from Glasgow, for poor old Warein in gin'ral 'eld it to 'is ear, and let the other end lay on the table; and so

it were a-layin' by 'is side, on the seat of the steamer, and a party as were serious took it up and begun for to shout at 'im, a-sayin' as he 'oped he was not one as would not 'ear.

Well, old Warein is not a serious character, and uncommon erritable when bawled at, as gives 'im hagony; so he up with 'is umbreller and give that party sich a smart one over the shins as made 'im 'owl and 'obble, too; but parties all took old Warein's side. So there it ended, as might 'ave led to words.

Mrs. Warein did leave a line for me, a-makin' sure as I should overtake 'em; but, bless you, there ain't no overtakin' Mr. Cook, as goes thro' the country like a whirlwind, as the sayin' is, and only stops of a Sunday for a day of rest, as is werry proper; not but what I'm one as likes it to be a 'oliday for all, and not a cold dinner neither, as is what a poor man gets all the week.

Not as Mr. Cook would go to give a cold dinner, but everythink quite comfortable, as pleases all as goes with 'im, and everywhere he goes; for I'd 'eard on 'im all along the road, and everyone 'ad a kind word for 'im. So I says to Brown, "Do let's overtake 'im."

"Bless your foolish 'art," says Brown, "why, he's 'ome ag'in by this time, and them as was with 'im."

"What," I says, "do you mean as I shan't see 'im no more this journey, nor all them nice people as was always along with 'im so friendly and pleasant?"

I says, "I am wexed, that I am, and do 'ope as we shall fall in with 'em ag'in somewheres, for I wants to know more on 'em;" and I says, "there were a party from Newcastle as 'ave give me a invitation, and if ever I do go to Newcastle, as I 'opes I shall, I'll go and see 'im, as sure as coals is coals."

I was reg'lar wexed and put out, to think we was parted, for one lady 'ad promised to show me a new stitch in croquet, and another was a-makin' a collar and cuffs as I wanted the pattern on, and tho' I was werry wexed at Glasgow with Maria Lukin, yet 'er ma and me was werry good friends, and 'ad borrowed 'arf-a-crown of me in Edinbro', as 'ad slipped her memory no doubt.

It's often the way with them trifles, as they will, for there was young McTaggit, he borrowed eighteenpence of me once, and never give it a second thought, but I did tho', and longed to remind 'im, for he is such a blower, as the Merrykins calls it, always a-boastin' of bein' such a swell, and a-goin' everywheres, and to 'ear 'im talk you'd think as he were Prince of Wales at the werry least all over; not as he'd borrer eighteenpence of any-

body and not pay, as 'ave been brought up too well for that, and 'is royal ma isn't one to 'old with sich goin's on, as must ruin even a prince in the long run, as it did George IV., as left the National Debt behind 'im when he died, as some says will be our ruin some day, tho' ever since I can remember, everythink 'ave been a-goin' to ruin, accordin' to some.

It was jest the same in my dear mother's time, as married when bread were 'arf-a-crown a loaf, and yet didn't starve to death neither, tho' there was nine on us at one time, and father down with the roomatics by the fortnight together.

Talk of 'ighland shows bein' wonderful, they are indeed, for I'm sure the crowds as come far and near for to see the one as we went to, they was reg'lar 'ighland droves, and I never see such a sight in my life.

It certingly are a lovely spot where they meets, with 'ills and dales, and all manner all over the place, and to see them Scotch a-dancin' and a-goin' on, it's downright wonderful 'owever they can do it.

For my own part it ain't a thing as I cares for, tho' I'm sure I never can forget their kindness nor yet the bagpipes as they begun a-playin' sudden behind my back the same evenin' as we got there.

We was a-settin' arter tea a-talkin' along with Mrs. McDrawley, as is a nice young 'ooman with

two as fine boys as ever I see, as does credit to oatmeal any'ow.

'Er 'usban' he's 'igh up in the perlice thro' bein' a inspector up there, and she keeps the post-office, as ain't much to do, but 'ad a little money thro' 'er mother.

Well, we was a-settin' chattin' on the sofy, and me not a-thinkin' of nothink, when out there busted behind my back sich a yell as I never 'eard afore, as I thought was wild cats got under the sofy.

I 'ad one of the little boys on my knee, and jumps up with a scream, and was a-rushin' out of the place, when Mrs. McDrawley stops me, tho' she couldn't 'ardly speak for larfin'.

I says, "Whatever is it?".

She says, "You're no feerd o' the pipes?"

I says, "What pipes?" thro' not a-smellin' no baccy, as I'd to 'oller, for I couldn't 'ardly 'ear myself speak for the row.

She come close up to me, and give me to understand as they was a-practisin' in the next room for the show.

I says, "Well, I've always thought as a baby show must be a nice row, but this 'll beat it any'ow for screams.

They didn't stop in the 'ouse I'm glad to say, with their beastly pipes, as was played by McDrawley's brothers, and one of 'em head-piper to

some of the 'ighland chiefs, and stands behind 'is chair all dinner a-makin' that row, and Mrs. McDrawley said on grand occasions there'd be as many as five on 'em a-'owlin' at once, tho' some on 'em groans awful like 'uman bein's in pain.

I do think as them Scotch is mad over them pipes, for if they wasn't at 'em the last thing at night and the fust in the mornin'.

I 'ad no patience with 'em for a-settin' some dogs a-'owlin' the last thing jest for company's sake, I suppose, as kep' it up all night thro' bein' a full moon, as they always will 'owl at, no doubt thro' bein' kep' awake by the light, as is the way with some Christshuns, for I've knowed parties as couldn't sleep a wink with a light in their eyes, and been obligated myself in sickness to put the light out of sight behind the chimbly board.

There is some as can't abear the tickin' of a clock, nor even a watch under the piller, as is a foolish place for it in my opinion, as is often forgot in gettin' up, as is pretty sure to get the glass smashed in makin' the bed, and in course can't blame the gal.

I don't think as ever I felt the 'eat more in my life than that next day, a-settin' for to see them 'ighlanders show off, as acted werry sing'ler, a-layin' two swords crossways on the ground, and a-dancin' and a-'oppin' all over 'em.

I says to Mrs. McDrawley, "It's always considered unlucky to cross knives," and I'm sure them swords is much more dangerous, as might slip and cut off a toe accidental, as is 'ighly dangerous, and apt for to end in a lock-jaw, the same as a lady I once knowed, as 'ad 'er little toe cut off thro' a-stickin' up thro' 'er shoe, not as I pitied 'er filthy pride, and a copse in three days, as shows the wanity of 'uman life, as is only a wapour arter all.

I see the reason why them 'ighlanders don't wear no trousers, as never could keep 'em up with all that leapin' and dancin', let alone the 'eat, and tearin' them to rags in a instant with their pranks.

I says to Mrs. McDrawley, "They must be as strong as 'Erclese, as the sayin' is, as were the strongest man as ever lived, as I've see is statty in 'Igh Park."

"No," she says, "that were Samson."

"Oh," I says, "no doubt," not a-wishin' to 'ave no argument, and a-thinkin' as Samson pre'aps were a Scotchman, as they always will 'ave is the fust at everythink, as is wonderful people, no doubt.

For when you comes to think as Dr. Watts were Scotch, as wrote the 'ymns, and inwented steam, as is enough to make any feel puffed-up like, and to think as there wouldn't never 'ave been no

steamboats, but for Glasgow, as was the fust, and they keeps on buildin' 'em still, and sends 'em all over the world, as 'ave got the name for 'em, jest like the old Chelsea bun 'ouse, as were always crowded of a Good Friday; and there's Burgess's essence of anchovies, as were found out by a bishop; why, you'll find it at the world's end.

It were a beautiful sight that show, I will say, with ladies, as was dressed lovely, and didn't seem to mind a bit walkin' arm-in-arm with them gents, as 'adn't no under garments on; but use is second natur, as the sayin' is.

I cannot say as I altogether 'olds with the dancin', partikler in a 'igh wind, and them 'ighlanders a-gettin' that escited as they danced more and more 'igher and wilder the more them pipes played.

I do think as the noise was a-drivin' 'em mad, for they yelled and shrieked, and jumped like rams with the sheep-dog arter 'em.

'Owever they could do it, I can't think; for they'd been a-wrestlin' all the mornin', and a-pitchin' a big stone about, and throwed a big trunk of a tree ever so far, till I thought as they must bust theirselves into bits.

I don't know what they does it for, but if it's fun, give me earnest, as seems ridiculous to waste your strength like that.

So I says to Brown on the quiet, "I do 'ope as you won't be persuaded for to slip off your things and go a-playin' no tricks."

He says, "Never fear, old gal, a Cockney like me wouldn't 'ave no chance even if I was sich a fool as to try."

"Well," I says, "you wouldn't be the only Cockney as makes a fool of 'isself up 'ere, in dressin' up like Scotch, a-fancyin' theirselves chiefs, 'cos they've got money and can buy a lot of property, tho' they're no more Scotch than me, and made their money in the cart-grease line, no doubt, as I 'eard tell of one as were a reg'lar larfin'-stock, and looked like a sack of fat, with nock-nees, a-struttin' about in a short kilt, and a cap and feather as made me die a-larfin'.

We'd a werry nice lunch, but for all that I will say, and I must say as I should 'ave been glad to 'ave got away from them pipes as never stopped their shrieks all day long.

I'm sure them 'ighlanders must 'ave lungs like leather to keep it up so strong, and there weren't no end to it, for one down t'other come on was their game from mornin' till night.

When we did get 'ome there wasn't no peace nor quiet, for we 'ad a tea like the Lord Mayor's feast, and it did my 'art good to see them pipers 'eat, as well they may blow if they eats like that.

Arter tea were over, they was all jolly a-singin' and dancin', with the toddy a-goin' round, but I could not a-bear them pipes a-shriekin' constant, so when there was a stop in the dancin', and a old gent as 'ad took quite enough toddy, and kep' on a-takin' snuff with a spoon out of a ram's 'ead, as 'adn't no trousers on, as is what I don't fancy a man a-settin' down without 'em in the bussum of 'is family.

He says to me, "What do you think of our music?"

"Well," I says, "sir, if you are illudin' to them pipes, I must say as they are noisy to any one as is not used to them, but," I says, "there is one thing as I should like to 'ear."

He says, "What's that?"

"Well," I says, "it's what I've 'eard speak on, but never see."

They was jest a-beginnin' them pipes ag'in, so he 'ollers out "Silence," a-sayin' as this good "leddy," as he called me, wants to 'ear somethink partikler.

There was a dead silence in a instant. "Now," says he, "what is it?"

"Well," I says, "you'll escuse me as a stranger a-askin' for it thro' not a-seein' any one with it, but I should like you just to 'ave one turn with the Scotch fiddle."

If you'd see the old gent's jaw drop, and 'ow he

stared, and one party close by me as 'ad just took a swig at 'is toddy, bust out a-larfin', and it flew all over the place, and pretty nigh strangled 'im, and another give me a slap on the back, a-sayin' "That's no bad."

It was werry bad for me, for he'd a 'and like a shoulder of mutton and a sledge-'ammer put together, and left 'is mark on me, but one old lady as set by me scowled fearful, and said "It's no civil in ye to insult us the like o' that."

I 'adn't no consumption what I'd done till I got up the next mornin', when Brown says to me, "You put your foot in it up to the ancle last night."

I says, "Mr. Brown, don't go to insinivate nothink, for I'm sure no judge and jury never was more sober than me last night, and as to puttin' my foot in it, I'm sure I never wanted to dance that reel, and wouldn't 'ave done it but for you."

He says, "I don't mean the reel as you seemed quite up to, but you're a-talkin' about the Scotch fiddle."

I says, "And why ever not, as must be a deal better than them pipes, and not near so irritatin' to the feelin's."

But when he told me what was meant by the Scotch fiddle, I thought I should 'ave dropped.

I says, "I must 'polergise, in course."

He says, "Let it alone; you'll only make a mess on it."

I says, "I won't, trust me for that."

We was a little bit late at breakfast, for we'd kep' it up late, and when I got down they all began to talk about my dancin', as they said was wonderful light, considerin'.

I didn't care to talk much about it myself, for I was rather ashamed on it, tho' only meant in fun; for old McGruffin, as is a uncle of Mrs. McDrawley, said as he couldn't go to rest without the reel of Tullygorum with me.

I says, "Go on with your rubbish at my time of life."

"Oh," says Mrs. McDrawley, "uncle is over seventy-five," and certingly a fine-limbed man for 'is time of life, as shows it is good for to let the legs 'ave their play in them as is growed up jest the same as babbies, as I always was one for to let 'em kick myself, not as old McGruffin needed to kick to strengthen 'is legs; for I'm sure the kick as he give me, a-settin' behind him, when he was 'avin' 'is fling, as ketched my corn, nearly sent me off in a dead faint.

He kep' a-goin' on so about the reel that, for peace and quiet sake, I said as I'd stand up, jest for to walk thro' it, as looks werry simple to them as is a-lookin' on, but 'ard when you comes to try it,

partikler with them a-jumpin' and shoutin', and snappin' their fingers, as is their 'abits, and a-twirlin' me round, as set my 'ead a-swimmin' and then they all 'ollers out to me, "Set, set;" and so I did, for I staggers to a seat that giddy, and down I flopped, pretty nigh dead for want of breath, when I got a kick as sent me sprawlin' all fours, with a screech as drownded even the pipes, and when I got up if I 'adn't gone and set on old Slaney's feet, as were Mr. McDrawley's grandfather, and a minister, as were a martyr to the gout, and only lifted out of bed on to a settle, jest to see the sport. But I'm sure as the gout ain't took away the use of both 'is feet, as I can bear witness to, for the kick as he give me a dray 'orse is a fool to it.

I suppose I must 'ave 'urt 'im, for they 'ad to take 'im to bed, and I was that sorry, not but what I 'ad my feelin's 'urt myself, and went off to bed in a 'urry.

So in course I didn't want to illude to my dancin' in the mornin', tho' I did ask arter the old gent, and they said as they was afraid it would fly to 'is stomick if drove from his feet, not as my settin' on 'em for a minit could drive it there.

We all felt rather done up, so went for a drive, to see where Queen Wictoria lives in 'er 'ighland

tower, as she takes every year, and sometimes twice.

It ain't much of a place for to look at it, and they do say as some of the Scotch as lives up there 'olds their 'eads a deal 'igher than hern, as was a-livin' in their castles quite the swells, afore ever 'er family was 'eard on, as shows 'ow things may come about; for I've know'd more than one Irish party as did ought to be kings, if everyone 'ad their rights, and, no doubt, there's many a one now as is rollin' in riches as is ill begotten with rightful 'airs a-walkin' about in work'us suits, as is all made one size, no great 'ardship pre'aps, but certingly did ought to be a deal more comfortable for them poor old folks, considerin' the rates as we pays, and it must be nothink but beastly spite as makes 'em treat the sick that shameful as they do.

In course you can't espect luxuries in a work'us, but they need not put a lump of common soda, the same as you uses in washin', into the tea, as they makes it all frothy like soapsuds for the poor old women, as a lady I knows see 'em do with 'er own eyes at Marry'bone.

We didn't see only the outside of that ere castle as is called Balmoral, arter the boots, not as they're things as I can wear myself, tho' they may suit Queen Wictoria's foot.

There was grand doin's all about all that week, not as I cared to see any more of 'em, and Brown, he was gettin' in a bit of a fidget, and I wasn't easy in my mind for fear as he should go a-tryin' any of them games, and give 'isself a strain, so when he talked of goin' I was quite ready.

Talkin' of bein' pressed to stop, I'm sure I thought as they'd never let us go, and 'ad to stop two days longer than we said, for they wouldn't let me 'ave my things from the wash.

I 'ad a chance of 'polergisin' about that ere slip as I 'ad made over the Scotch fiddle, for we was at tea the night afore we left, and a-talkin' about one thing and the other, I says, "What ridiculous notions, parties 'as over in England about Scotland."

They all says, "What do they say?"

"Why," I says, "they told me as you was all obligated for to live on brimstone, thro' 'avin' sich irritable skins."

Says a old woman, as were Mrs. McDrawley's aunt, a-speakin' that broad like as I couldn't quite make 'er out,

"Ye'd best leave our skins alane, and look at your ain nose."

I didn't say nothink, thro' a-feelin' that 'urt, for tho' not a red nose by natur, I must say as the sun 'ad laid 'old on it.

So a-thinkin' to change the subject, I says, "Whatever is the reason as sulphur is so precious," for, I 'adn't seen a bit nowheres all over Scotland.

That old fury she flew out at me and says, as I did ought to be ducked, and all manner, and if they 'adn't brought out the whiskey for the gentlemen as come in just then and didn't care for no tea, I do think as we should 'ave 'ad a row.

But it certingly is sing'ler that Mrs. Lukin should 'ave mentioned as the Scotch was always a-blessin' the Duke of Argyle for a-puttin' up posts for them to rub their backs ag'in, and sure enough all along the road a-leadin' from Inverness there's the posts as looks werry much rubbed.

When I asked Mrs. McDrawley about it, she says, "For mussy sake don't play any more of your jokes on my aunt, as can't see no fun in 'em."

I says, "I'm sure as I'm dumb afore 'er for ever," a dried up 'old 'errin', as took snuff by the bushel, and 'er toddy 'arf and 'arf at the werry least.

But, law, I 'ad enjoyed myself wonderful, and was that sorry to leave, and so was they to lose me, and made me promise faithful as I'd come back, and give me sich recipies for jams, and pickles, and mutton 'ams, as I didn't care much about; but certingly their jams is lovely, especially

marmalade, and yet I never see no oranges a-growin' nowhere about.

Talk of flowers, I never see anythink more lovely than their gardings, as is a wonderful industrious lot, and that larnin' as could talk geography, and all manner; and 'ow the stars was worked, and what made the thunder, till I was quite dumbfoundered and afraid to open my mouth.

The next place as we went to were Perth, as is where the fair maids all come from, I didn't see but two pretty gals there, and they was both dark.

We was only in Perth a few 'ours, as is a old ancient spot, as Scotland is altogether, and once full of fightin', tho' werry peaceful now.

I believe as in old times they was always a-fightin' over somethink or other, as is the way with some.

Not as you can believe a word as is wrote in them 'istories, 'cos in course every one tells 'is own story, and one story is werry good till the other is told, as the sayin' is.

I'm told as nearly all the 'istories 'ave been wrote by Scotchmen, so in course they'd speak the truth.

There was a deal more as I wanted to see in Scotland, but we 'adn't time; I wished partikler to 'ear about Wallis, as were the Nero of Scotland, as I remembers 'avin' read to me by a young lady

where I lived, when quite a gal, as were a noble character; and as to that king as 'ung 'im in chains, why I should like to 'ave the 'angin' of 'im, a waggerbone.

But I ain't no patience to 'ear about them kings and queens and their goin's on, for when they're wile wretches and kills every one, then everybody praises 'em, and when they're good why they're sure to be murdered, as is no doubt the reason as they 'ave pitched into the people so strong, a well knowin' that if they didn't, the people would pitch into them.

I think I must 'ave took cold a-settin' on them 'ighlands, for I was took that bad with lumbago at Edinbro', as we was forced to stop there over a week, as put Brown out dreadful; but I wasn't sorry, for it give me a rest, and we got a lodgin' as didn't come dear, and me and the lady of the 'ouse was soon friends; as to Brown he went back to Glasgow all in a uff, to wait there.

In course Edinbro' is werry different now, but it certingly did give me a turn when we was a-talkin' one evenin' over tea, me and Mrs. Slogin, as we lodged along with, and she told me as she'd know'd the time well when it weren't safe to trust yourself out after dark thro' robberies and murders in the open streets, let alone what were down in some of them old 'ouses.

I never did 'ear a woman so full of 'orrers and stories all about second sight, as is werry common up in the 'ighlands.

"Well," I says, "I'm sure I shouldn't mind 'avin' a second sight of anythink as I've seen up there, as wasn't no ghosts, nor spectres, but flesh and blood, with warm 'arts a-beatin' in 'em."

"Ah!" she said, "but ye've no idea of the dangers of this place when I was a mere girl;" for she was a-tellin' me as there was the burkers alone as was enough to frighten you to death, a-waitin' at the corners of the streets with pitch-plaisters over your mouth, and a large cloak as 'urried you into eternity, where you was cut up for them doctors, as didn't even respect the dead in their graves.

Mrs. Slogin told me as one foggy night in November, a-goin' out on a errant for to fetch 'ome a dress, she'd been seized by a man and 'ad been werry nigh burked 'erself.

Then in course I remembered quite well all about 'Are and Burke as begun that ere game, bein' from Scotland, and they do say as 'Are is a blind beggar about London streets now, as 'ave got 'is punishment it is true, but not a party as I should encourage myself, as in my opinion deserves to starve, a cruel wretch.

I never shall forget about that poor Italian boy, and jest for 'is teeth too, as is enough to make any-

one quite timbersome to show, as they'ave got a good set, partikler when fastened in with a gold plate.

So, tho' better arter two days rest, I didn't relish a-goin' about nowheres of a evenin', with the days a-drawin' in, for Mrs. Slogin did say as parties is alive now as did used to encourage them burkers.

'Ow they can sleep in their beds, I can't think.

I got my 'ead so full of them burkers, as I dreamt of nothink else all that night.

The next arternoon I got a letter from Brown, a-tellin' me to come on to Glasgow to 'im the next day arter, as he were a-goin' 'ome straight, and didn't want to come back to Edinbro'.

Well, Mrs. Slogin she'd gone out early, a-meanin' to tea along with 'er sister, as lives in the old town, and I'd promised for to go arter 'er, if a-feelin' up to it.

So I puts on my things and walks that way slow, and took a friendly cup of tea, tho' up too many stairs for me.

We come away early, tho' dusk, and as we was a-crossin' what they calls the North Bridge, Mrs. Slogin says to me, "This is jest about where I was dodged by that 'ere burker, as followed me all the way to Queen Street, where I was a-livin' lady's-maid, and werry nigh throttled me on the stair, as was only saved thro' the openin' of a door on another flat."

Jest then we got to the corner of 'er street, and she says as she wanted to call in at a shop, and says to me, "Do you walk on slow, and I'll overtake you in a minit."

So on I walks, and gets to 'er door, as lives on the second floor, and jest as I got to the door on the fust floor, out of it busts a man, and seizes 'old on me, and tries to drag me into the apartment, a-sayin' "I've been a-waitin' for you, and now I've got you, for the doctor's a-waitin' for you."

I give a scream, and says "'elp," and backs out ag'in wiolent, makin' sure he were a burker.

He says, "Ye canna be spared ony langer."

I didn't make no more ado, but flies at 'is throat and pins 'im ag'in the wall, and jest then a gal came out, as flew at me and give it me frightful 'ot with 'er knees and fistes into my back.

We was all in the door-way as I wouldn't let 'em shut, and it's lucky as I didn't, for Mrs. Slogin wouldn't never 'ave seen me, as come up jest then, and soon set it all to rights, as were all a mistake, thro' there bein' sickness in the 'ouse, and a nuss espected as 'ad disappointed 'em, and the poor man 'arf crazy, a-rushin' for the doctor.

So all were esplained, and just then the nuss come, a reg'lar old fright, not a bit like me, but I felt that gal's knees as 'ad touched up my back pretty sharp, and Mrs. Slogin told me as I pretty

nigh strangled that party as I took for a burker, let alone the noise nearly frightenin' 'is poor wife to death, not as it were not my fault, nor 'is'n neither, but all that dratted gal as 'ad been out on a errand and see me a-comin' up to the stair, and thought as I were the party as they'd been waitin' for for 'ours, so up she rushes to say as I were come, and out come the 'usban' to meet me, and so caused all the confusion, as might have ended serious.

I can't say as I were sorry to be off out of Edinbro', tho' Mrs. Slogin were a sister to me, and shed tears at partin', but I wanted to be 'ome.

Of all the places as I went thro' for to get to Glasgow I never did; and as to Glasgow, it's like livin' in a chimbly, tho' a fine town, no doubt, if you could see it.

We was only there one night, and stopped at one of them temperance 'otels, as was that quiet, as it seemed quite like 'ome; tho' I must say as Brown come in werry late, as said as he'd been out on business, as no doubt he 'ad, but not on a dry job I should say, altogether, tho' not a man ever to forget 'isself with liquor.

I'm sure it was quite a pleasure for me to go anywheres in Scotland, temperance or no temperance, for every one was that kind, and seemed to look on me like a old friend, as I 'opes I shall ever be, thro' bein' Scotch myself like by distraction, as the sayin'

is; for I've 'eard say as my grandfather's, great aunt by the mother's side, were fust cousin, twice removed to a party as belonged to the Scotch Greys, as is a old ancient family, and grey 'eads is 'onorable all the world over; and as to bein' ashamed on 'em, and a-takin' to dyin', I says, "Never as cannot 'elp a front, as may be took to easily, thro' the 'air a-wearin' off at the partin', and a-goin' altogether," for tho' I do consider as a nice bald 'ead looks well in a man, it is certingly a eyesore in a fieldmale.

But, law, when I comes to look back, it seems like a dream, me a-goin' to Scotland; not but what that's what life is altogether, and not by no means a pleasant one to everybody, and a downright nightmare to some.

I must say as I'm fond on the Scotch, and am sorry as they're a-gettin' fewer and fewer thro' them a-emigratin', and all the place bein' turned into 'untin' grounds, as is werry well for pleasure in them as can afford it—but 'ow about the poor?

Ah, it's a 'ard world for them as ain't got money, as I were a-sayin' to a gent aboard the steamer a-goin' thro' them locks, as he said was all kep' for preserves.

I says, "Oh, indeed; but," I says, "whatever can they get to preserve off them 'ills?" for I knowed as no fruit growed there but blackberries.

"Oh," he says, "plenty of game."

"Well," I says, "preserves is werry well in fruits and sich-like, but I do not 'old with them preserved meats, and what is game but meat when all said and done?"

"Oh," he says, "you'd preserve it if you knowed the cost of it."

"Well," I says, "goodness knows, meat is dear enough in London, as rump-steak is charged fourteenpence the pound; though not a price as I'd pay, with my money in my 'and, so in course if they can preserve it, and send it up, why all the better, as I 'ear they're a-goin' to do with beef from Australia, as I 'ope'll be better than what they sent one time from South Merryker, a-callin' of it jarky, and jarky work it was for the teeth, I'm sure, as chew it you couldn't, 'owever much you tried."

"Well," says the gentleman, as stared at me werry 'ard, "we must get the meat from somewhere if we're to feed the people."

"Oh," I says, "there's lots of food for every one, if it wasn't as some is too greedy and gets more than their share, and won't let others 'ave a bit, though they can't eat it all theirselves any more than they can sleep in more than one bed at a time."

I don't think as that old gentleman understood me a bit, for I 'eard 'im say, that werry arternoon,

as he never met such a estraordinary old woman as that is in the plaid gownd and yaller bonnet; not as he need 'ave called me old, for I might 'ave been 'is daughter, and I'm sure my gownd were a lovely plaid, and as to my bonnet, it were trimmed new a brimstone colour to come to Scotland in, but the blacks out of the steamer's chimbly 'ad reg'lar done for it, let alone the steam, as come down in showers and lodged in the trimmin'.

There is one thing as I can't make out, and why it is them Scotch should speak that sing'ler, leastways it sounded so to me thro' always bein' used to 'ear good Hinglish, and can't abear no bad langwidge, and my dear mother always did used to say to me, "Martha, whatever you do, speak like a lady," as is my constant aims, tho' not one to boast of my larnin' nor nothink.

I was that pleased with goin' to Scotland with Mr. Cook, that if I 'adn't been a-goin' to Margate I should 'ave liked to 'ave gone along with 'im to Switzerland, as he started for next week.

Brown he reg'lar snubbed it, as the sayin' is, for he says "You're such a old duffer for gettin' left behind, as is all werry well near 'ome, but if you was to be left a-stickin' on the Halps, it would be all up with you then as wouldn't never be got off."

I says, "Brown, there's many a true word spoke in jest, as the sayin' is, and it might so 'appen, and

what would your feelin's be, if I were brought 'ome to you piecemeal, or reg'lar discoloured, the same as old Mr. Adams, as went up on to the top of the 'ouse thro' the chimbly a fire, and fell 'ead foremost into the cockloft next door, through 'a-mistakin' the parapitch, as was where they 'ad a dye-'ouse, and never got the colour out 'im thro' fallin' into a wat as were a bright mauve, and warranted fast, as 'ave settled in the back of 'is 'ead, tho' over two years ago, and is a proof of the colour a-standin' even with constant washin'."

'Owever them plaids is dyed puzzles me, and not 'ave one colour run into the other, but, law, them Scotch can do anythink, as is that perseverin', as they'll go a-walkin' and a-stalkin' for weeks arter a deer, and ketch 'im at last, tho' wonderful swift and can smell you at any distance, they tells me, so they always keeps to the windward on 'em the same as you did always to do aboard a steamer, tho' I must say as I found it werry unpleasant, tho' it may be the rules at sea; the same as keepin' the left 'and in drivin'.

I don't think as ever I felt better in my life than when I got back from Scotland, and that sunburnt as you'd think I'd been out to Ingy, with my nose all skinned.

It's a rare 'ealthy place to go to, and for any one as wants a bit of a run, as every one does as is shet

up in business all their lives, and when sickly let 'em 'ave a bit of a Scotch fling with Mr. Cook, as will know their espences, and be saved all the bother, and as to fieldmales as is on the look out for a protector, there can't be nothink like it, let alone Mr. Cook as is all attention, thro' bein' a married man 'isself, but I'm sure all the gentlemen of the party was that attentive as it were quite a pleasure, and yet no free ways nor nothink as required a check.

I must say as the Scotch did use to stare at me werry 'ard, as don't seem to me to know always what they're a-talkin' about, for I see a poor gal one evenin' as looked werry pale and thin, a-restin' by the roadside, and a old woman with 'er, and as I wanted rest thro' it bein' up 'ill, I stopped and asked what were the matter.

"Oh!" says the old woman, "she's just a poor silly creature."

But, law bless you, when I talked to that young woman she 'ad all 'er wits about 'er; and they told me arterwards as the old woman only meant as she were weak and sickly, as it were werry unfeelin' to call 'er silly for bein'.

I was werry often took a-back by their ways of talkin' about all manner, partikler one day as I come in arter 'avin' 'ad for to cross one of them brooks, as they calls burns, as I should say scalds was nearer

the mark, they all says to me when I got in, "You'd best change your feet," as reg'lar puzzled me, till I found as they calls shoes and stockin's feet, as certingly is much the same.

I thought I should 'ave burst out larfin' in Mrs. McDrawley's aunt's face, when she said to me one arternoon, "As I should ne'er sit on the door."

I says, "I am not a-goin' to, mum," a-wonderin' 'owever it were done; but a-thinkin' it was one of their old ancient ways pre'aps, and not a place as I could 'ave climbed to, not to 'ave saved my life, and then found as she meant ag'in the door.

As to me climbin', I couldn't even get over a gate one arternoon, as a dog chivvied me ever so far, and was a-balancin' myself on the top bar jest as the shepherd called 'im off, as I suppose took me for a lost sheep, as in course he might do, a-judgin' only by the scent, for my dress were only wool arter all, and jest the same as a sheep's, when you comes to think on it.

I do 'ope as I shall go to the 'ighlands ag'in, in fact all over Scotland, if it's only to say thank you once more to all them as 'ave treated me so kind there; and let any one as wants to know anythink about Mr. Cook's escursions only come to me as may rely on secrecy, and needn't put no name nor address neither, and then could not be found out.

Not but what I've got a friend as will always

answer for me I'm sure in Fleet Street, as is No. 80, not as I'm ashamed of my own name, and don't 'old with two faces under one 'ood, as the sayin' is, yet am sure as he would speak up for me; thro' bein' one as would always stick to a old friend at a pinch.

Not as any one can say as ever any one offered me a pinch in all Scotland, escept one as were a mull, as is their 'abits, tho' that 'igh dried, as the wind took it all into my face, and is said to be a fine thing for the eye, and made a-purpose, as is called Grimstone, or Brimstone, I don't know which.

It certingly were lovely weather all the time we was in Scotland, as is always so with Mr. Cook, and goes by the name on it, the same as Queen Wictoria weather, as in course wouldn't go out without it, thro' not bein' obligated to; not as the Scotch minds the weather a bit, and is that 'ardy as they will jest as soon go out weather or no, as the sayin' is, and a unconquerable lot as never give in to England till they was united by law, as in course it's a duty for to obey, or else you'll be made to, so it's best to do it with a good grace.

Not as I 'olds with parties bein' bullied by the perlice, the same as them three young gentlemen was in the 'Aymarket, and locked up wrongful and no redress, as is as bad as what 'appened in Paris to two brothers, as I heard speak on, when there

was them rows over there about the elections, as was a-walkin' peaceable thro' a street where there wasn't no crowd nor nothink a-goin' on, and was set on by six of the surgons de weal, as kicked 'em about and dragged 'em to prison, as was kep' in four-and-twenty 'ours and then let go, arter bein' kep' in a filthy place where 'undreds 'ad been shet up for over two days, and 'arf-starved, and then told as they was orderly, well-behaved parties as was what they knowed afore, and couldn't get no satisfaction, nor nothink, all because of our bein' afraid of offendin' that Bonyparty as old King George would 'ave punched 'is 'ead long ago.

Nowadays we can be werry brave ag'in a poor nigger wretch, like that there king of Abbysinyer, as wasn't no better than a nigger, and never 'ad a chance of tellin' 'is side of the story, but were soon snuffed out, but knocks under to any one as can 'old their own.

But, law, what is the use of talkin', it's all the same all the world over; one man may steal a 'orse where another durstn't look over the 'edge, as the sayin' is.

But, law, now as I'm got back 'ome ag'in from Scotland, I must say as their ways is sing'ler, for I knowed one young boy as wouldn't touch a bit of salt, and said as he liked a hegg as 'ad some flaviour

in it, as was that musty as was enough to blow your 'ead off, and would 'ave upset me, as is a thing I can't abear, and never shall forget one as got into my Christmas puddin' unbeknown one year, and spilte the lot.

Not as I believes that rubbish about the Scotchman as liked 'is heggs 'addled thro' a-thinkin' as he'd got a chicken for the price of a hegg into the bargain.

I must say as they told me some wonderful tales about what they called rathes, as is a-seein' any one afore their death as isn't their real selves, but their sperrits.

But, law, it ain't no use a-givin' in to them things as is enough to make your life a burden to you, the same as believin' in dreams, as, in a general way, is only what you 'ave 'ad for supper, not but what I did 'ear wonderful things about a dream, as certingly found out about Maria Martin bein' murdered in the Red Barn, as were a lonely spot, but mustn't be give into no more than second sight, as werry nigh led me into a pretty 'obble.

For when we was in the 'ighlands, once me and Brown 'ad a sofy-bed in a parlour, thro' one place bein' that full, as there wasn't 'ardly room to stick a pin, as the sayin' is.

Well, I'd gone to bed early, thro' my 'ead a-splittin', afore Brown, and must 'ave been asleep,

when I 'eard a noise as woke me up, and I looks out of the bed, and what should I see but the floor a-openin', and a man's 'ead a-comin' up with a light.

Thinks I to myself, this is one of them second sights as is a-comin' to warn me ag'in somethink as is a-goin' to 'appen, as is what I don't 'old with, for in my opinion it's better not to know as is wisely ordered in a general way, for if we was to know what's a-goin' to 'appen next week we shouldn't do nothink.

Tho' I do wish as I'd knowed as it were a-goin' to be wet the other day, and would not 'ave 'ad my blankets and counterpins washed, as was a reg'lar bother to 'ave the dryin' on 'em indoors, as broke the lines twice across the kitchen, as there was no a-goin' into all day for 'em, and never seems that fresh and 'olesome like, as a good blow makes 'em, and our back gardin is a reg'lar whirlwind when it blows from the back of the 'ouse.

Well, I says to myself, "I ain't a-goin' to listen to none of this ere rathe's goin's on," and see as he were a-comin' up slow thro' the floor as were a flap door, so I creeps out of bed quite quiet, and in two steps was upon that flap, as opened the other way, so that sperrit 'ad 'is back to me.

I takes and jumps with a spring on the flap all fours, as shet it down with a crump, as the sayin' is.

Of all the rows as ever you 'eard of somebody

a-fallin' and 'ollerin' with broken bottles a-crashin', and in run the people of the 'ouse, a-'owlin' and screechin' like a Scotch bedlam broke loose.

There I was a-layin' on my face over that trap as they tried for to lift me up, only I kicked and plunged a-sayin' get out; for I didn't want a lot of them fellers to be a-pickin' me up.

I says, "Get out of the room all but the ladies, and I'll esplain," and so they did, and then I rolls over and sets up.

Says Mrs. McTagart, as were the lady of the 'ouse's name, "Get up, you're a-murderin' a man as is under you."

I says, "Whatever do you mean?"

She says, "Get off the trap."

I says, "I ain't in no trap, but 'ave seen a second sight."

She called me all the old fools as she could lay 'er tongue to, and says, "She wished she'd never set eyes on me," and opens the door to call in the men, for she couldn't lift up that flap, tho' she pulled 'ard at it by a iron ring.

I says, "Let me put a somethink on afore the oppersite sect is let in."

"Oh," she says, "what's it matter 'ow any one sees a old fright like you."

I says, "I'm ready for any one now," for I slipped on my wrapper and a shawl over my 'ead.

In come two fellers as lifted up that trap; and up they brings a man 'arf dead.

"Ah," I says, "I thought he were a sperrit as is no doubt a thief, and you did ought to be much obliged to me."

They says, "If he dies you'll 'ave to answer for it."

It's well as I don't understand Scotch, for of all the tongues as that 'ooman give loose to as I couldn't have stood from no mortal soul, only thro' bein' undressed, and nowhere to go, and 'er bein' likewise the lady of the 'ouse, as were a reg'lar Dragon at all times, and they do say give McTagart the broom'andle on the quiet; as was the reason as he couldn't wear 'is kilt sometimes for weeks together along of the bruises.

"Well," she says to me, "what are ye been doin', murderin' the man?" only she said "mon."

I says, "He ain't no right there if he's a man, and if he's a rathe as I see a-comin' up thro' the floor, I didn't want 'im in my room."

"Oh," she says, "you've just ruined us," and calls in 'er daughter as spoke more plainer than 'er mother, and if it wasn't all a mistake of mine, for it was only the waiter, poor man, as 'ad gone down into the cellar for to bring up a basketful of bottled hale, and were a-comin' up slow thro' its bein' 'eavy, and if I 'adn't been and shet down

the trap on 'is 'ead and werry nigh stunned 'im to death, for they found 'im a-layin' at the bottom of the steps, with all the broken bottles under 'im, and his nose a-bleedin' like fountings a-playin' with the hale all over the place.

I says, "Whatever right 'ad he a-intrudin' into my room, as is a room all the same, tho' only a sofy-bed on the ground floor.

Says Mrs. McTagart, "What 'arm when you was a-snorin' like an old 'og, and never 'eard us come in; for I looked in myself afore he came in and see you was fast asleep, and it's the only way to the cellar."

I says, "'Ow dares you let a he male creetur come into my room, as if my 'usban' caught 'im might 'ave ended in murder?"

She bust out a-larfin', a-sayin' as my 'usban' didn't care, for he'd give 'im leave.

I was werry much 'urt with Brown, 'as made uncommon light on it afore others, tho' he gave it me pretty 'ot for a-shettin' the trap down on the man's 'ead, as in course I didn't go to do, not a-thinkin' 'im to be real flesh and blood.

I says, "I don't want none of them Scotch ways of goin' on, and all I got to say is if them parties comes into my room unawares, let 'em look out for squalls, as the sayin' is, for if they're men, it's like their impidence, and if only sperrits, let 'em mind their own bissiness."

Says Brown, "You mustn't be so mighty partikler, every one roughs it as comes up to the 'ighlands, from Queen Wictoria downwards, as you can see if you reads 'er book."

I says, "If Queen Wictoria likes to rough it, that's 'er affair, but I'm sure as she wouldn't never let a low-lived pot-boy come up thro' a trap-door close ag'in 'er bed-'ead, and nearly frighten 'er to death, a-starin' at any one in their sleep, for tho' 'is back were turned to me a-comin' up, in course it were the rewerse a-goin' down."

Not as I should 'ave cared so much about it, only bein' short of nightcaps, I 'adn't got on one as I wears in a gin'ral way, with a two deep borders asides 'avin' no 'air on, as I always sets on the Italian iron myself, the same as my dear mother taught me, but was a-sleepin' in my skull cap, with a yaller silk 'ankercher round my 'ead, as I've done, thro' Scotland bein' such a werry draughty place, as is the reason why they're always a-takin' a drop of whiskey, as keeps up the circulation, tho' apt to fly to the nose.

They all 'ad a good larf over my mistake next mornin' afore we started, not as I should have larfed if I'd know'd, as it 'ad cost Brown pretty nigh a sov'rin to pay for the bottled hale, and that feller's 'ead, as wasn't no bones broke, but only stunned.

I'm sure it's a wonder as I didn't ketch my death a-goin' on as I did in Scotland, a-settin' about as I did, partikler at them 'ighland shows, as is all werry well, but rather too much of a good thing for me; and as to Brown, he got a reg'lar fit of the shivers one night, and he says to me, "Martha, I'll tell you what it is, I shall slip off to bed on the quiet, for my bones reg'lar aches."

"Ah," I says, "you've been a-tryin' on one of them kilts in a easterly wind, as is sure to touch you up."

Now I says, "There's only one thing as will set you to rights, and that is your bed warmed, as will draw the cold out of your bones, with a little brown sugar put in the warmin' pan for to throw you into a glow."

He says, "Well, I don't mind, only don't make no row over it."

Well, I see a werry nice warmin'-pan a-'angin' up in the kitchen, as were kep' as bright as a gold watch.

So while they was all a merry-makin' and a-singin', and old Mr. McDoodle were a-dancin' 'is strathspay as they calls it, as I considers a old fool for 'is pains, thro' bein' over seventy, as looks ridiculous in a kilt, and all 'is stockin's come down with the dancin'.

Well, he was a-goin' on werry loud, as I

must say as I think as whiskey were at the bottom of it, for a old lady told me as he were a worthy man, and but for the drop would have been a Judge.

Well, while he was a-goin' on, I gives Brown a nudge, and says, "You slip away unbeknown, and I'll go and warm the bed."

So I goes out into the kitchen, and if the fire 'adn't got quite low, so I puts on some coals, and set to and blowed it up with the bellers, as is things I never uses myself, and always locks 'em up at 'ome, for them gals, if they once gets 'old on 'em will blow a ton of coals away in no time, let alone the firewood, as they'll put into the fire by the bundle under the tea-kittle, thro' not 'avin' it on the bile by five, as is my orders.

Well, I blowed up a bit of fire, and then takes a few 'ot coals out from the bottom, puts them in the pan, but couldn't get 'old of the sugar-bason, so 'urries into our bed-room, and if it wasn't all dark, thro' the shetters bein' shet.

I says, "Brown, are you here?" There wasn't no answer.

I says, "'Ow aggrawatin' of Brown not to be come in, as 'll 'ave the bed cold ag'in afore he's undressed."

I knowed jest where the bed stood, so didn't need no light, but felt for the bottom posts, lifts up

the coverin', and runs the warmin'-pan in at the foot.

I felt as there were a hobstacle, and says to myself, "It's some of them boys and gals a been a larkin' a-makin' us a apple-pie bed, no doubt."

So I gives a wiolent drive with the warmin'-pan, and 'eard a roar like ten thousand bulls, and felt the warmin'-pan were sent a-flyin' out ag'in, as the 'andle on ketched me in the chest, and sent me a-spinnin' back'ards, and it's lucky as I always wears them old-fashioned stays with a broad busk, or I should 'ave 'ad my diagram stove in, as the sailors says.

I felt as them live coals must all be in the bed, so 'ollers "Fire!" with all my might, and they all come a-rushin' in with lights, and there was a pretty 'ow-d'ye-do.

For there was old McDoodle, as is uncle to Mr. McDoodle, where we'd been a-stoppin'; he was a-layin' on the bed a-'rithin' in agonies, kickin' and plungin' with a live coal close ag'in 'im, and the pan on the floor, with the lead open, and all the coals out, as was a-singein' everythink.

You never seed such a scene, for some was a-larfin', and some a-yellin' and a-pickin' up the coals, and as to Brown, he set to and called me all the old fools as he could lay 'is tongue to; and others said as they must roll old McDoodle in oatmeal,

whilst some said as he'd 'ave to lay in scraped pertater till mornin' for 'is burns, and all 'is own fault, a old fool, as got a-dancin' and a-drinkin' till that giddy as he run out of the room, and went and throwed 'isself on our bed, thro' not a-knowin' what he was a-doin', till I come and waked 'im up with the warmin'-pan, as in course a kilt ain't no protection ag'in.

When we was alone, as wasn't till next mornin', I give it Brown 'ot, not with the warmin'-pan, but with my tongue, for a-sayin' as he'd come to bed early, and 'ave it warmed, and then to go and set up till past one o'clock, and when he did come to bed to keep a-gigglin' over that accident, as might 'ave ended serous but for that old man bein' a fine constitution, and that 'ardy as could bear pain without bein' inflamed, as a burn is a nasty thing.

It wasn't no use a-talkin' to Brown, as said as the settin' up had done 'im more good than all the warmin'-pans as ever was inwented.

I was werry much put out tho', for fear as that old gentleman should take it in bad part, and pre-'aps fancy as it were one of my jokes, as certingly am fond of a bit of fun, but not anythink as would 'urt any one's feelin's the same as a 'ot warmin'-pan.

But he was a jolly old soul, and larfed 'arty over it, and said as it didn't raise a blister, tho' it

give 'im a shock at fust, as is only nat'ral, for I well remembers myself when a child a-jumpin' into bed on to a warmin'-pan myself, thro' bein' impatient and not a-waitin' till it was out, as was a trifle then, but wouldn't do it now, not for all the world, for I couldn't jump off it ag'in quite so nimble as I did then, as no doubt saved my life.

I 'adn't been 'ome not many days when in who should come but Mrs. Lukin and Maria, as I were glad to see, thro' not bein' one for to bear no malice.

So I says, "Well, I calls this friendly," I says, "and let bygones be bygones," illudin' in my own mind to the eighteenpence as I thought she'd come to pay me back.

Well, I see by 'er looks as there were a screw loose somewheres, as the sayin' is, for she looked werry sour, and Maria set a-lookin' straight down 'er nose, leastways as straight as she could with the bridge broke.

Says Mrs. Lukin, a-bridlin' up, "Our wisit, Mrs. Brown, is business."

I says, "Well, then, set down, and let's 'ave it out, as is only a trifle, arter all; but if you will be proud, and settle it, well and good;" still my 'ead a-runnin' ag'in that eighteenpence.

She says, "I am not proud, as is sinful, but," she says, "I cannot be spoke ag'in behind my

back, and 'ave that poor orphin gal's character ruined thro' you, mum."

I says, "Whatever do you mean?"—a-turnin' round sudden, for I was at my corner cupboard, a-gettin' out some refreshments for 'em thro' a-lookin' dry and dusty with a long omblibus ride.

"Oh!" says Maria, "ma's 'art's too full to speak, and so I must, tho' it goes ag'in the grain to speak to such a slanderer."

"Oh!" I says, "if you've come 'ere with your low-lived abuse," I says, "the sooner as you takes the 'bus 'ome ag'in the better."

"Oh!" says Mrs. Lukin, a-bustin' out, "we only come for your sake as becomes Christshuns, for friends 'ave adwised us to go to my sliciter, as I would 'ave done, but didn't like to ruin you in Chancery."

I says, "You can try and ruin me if you likes, but let me know what I've done, as may be some mistake."

"No," says Maria, "it's no mistake, but in print, as you may see," she says, a-'oldin' out to me a bit of print as 'ad been cut out of a paper.

I says, "I don't want to see it; tell me what it is."

"Why," says Maria, "it's 'ere printed as you said as parties as went with Mr. Cook to the 'ighlands was sich numbers that at one place there

wasn't beds enough in the 'otels, so some was obligated to be sent to the Union."

I says, "I never uttered such a thought from my brain."

"Yes," says Mrs. Lukin, "you must, or else 'ow would any one 'ave knowed as me and Maria was at the Union, as is no work'us, but a first-class 'otel up at Inverness, and as you've been and run down 'cos you was left behind; and all your own fault, as no doubt did it for the purpose, to 'ave a spree all by yourself, thro' not a-likin' them tea-total ways."

I did feel 'arf inclined for to take 'em both by the shoulders and turn 'em slap out of the place, and I would 'ave done it too, only but for the neighbours, as is a pryin' lot.

I says, "I don't care what paper it's in or out on, but all I got to say is, as if you takes offence at such a expression, if used, you did ought to be shet up in a glass case, and showed for curiosities."

Maria says, "Ma, come away. I told you to 'ave the law on her, as would be sure to insult us."

Says Mrs. Lukin, "Are you a-goin' to apolergise in the 'Times'?"

I says, "No, not in the 'Times' nor nowheres else, as 'ave done nothink to you."

Says Maria, "You 'ave. You've said we was sent to the Union in Scotland."

I says, "I never did say so, but I can now, with a clear conscience."

"Who dares to say so?" says she.

"Why, you told me so yourself jest now," says I.

"Ah!" says she, "this comes of goin' about with such a wulgar old woman."

"Now," I says, "to come the Merrykin over you, jest you clear out, the pair on you; and send me that eighteenpence as you borrowed at 'Ollyrood in postage stamps;" and I opens the door for 'em.

Says Mrs. Lukin, "You shall 'ear from my sliciter."

I says, "By all means, pay in six-and-eightpence to send me eighteenpence; that's the sort of work such a lawyer's as yourn would like;" and out I bundles 'em.

I sat down and 'ad a good think when they was gone, a-tryin' to recollect if ever I 'ad used sich a espression, and then remembered as there 'ad been some jokin' comin' away from Inverness about goin' to the Union; as shows 'ow careful parties did ought to be on their guard a-speakin', as a word took the wrong way will set the world in a blaze; but I never got my eighteenpence, nor yet the lawyer's letter, from Mrs. Lukin, as ain't such a fool as she looks, as the sayin' is.

I must say as there's some things in Scotland

as I do not 'old with, for they was a-tellin' me a story all about a young 'ooman as were a bold, bad 'ussey, and 'ad a lover as were some furriner, as she wrote to, more like a fool as she were.

Well, this 'ere feller were a low-lived wretch, and 'er no better, tho' callin' 'erself a lady, and wanted 'er to give 'im money, and 'cos she wouldn't, said as he'd show 'er letters, as was busters.

So, to stop 'is mouth she comes the carney over 'im a-pretendin' as she loved 'im better than ever, and took and give 'im pisoned sweetmeats, as pretty soon settled 'is 'ash.

She were tried for the murder, but got off 'cos nobody see 'er put the pison in them sugar-plums, tho' everybody knowed as she was guilty, and they only said as it was not proven. So there she was got off as in course was only thro' money; and is married and a-doin' well somewhere.

"Well," I says to the lady as were a-tellin' me about it, "she've got off this time, but it'll come 'ome to 'er, a wretch; and as to the man as could marry such a wiper, let's 'ope as she'll pison 'im and them as got 'er off, and come to the gallows at last, as is 'er just due; wherever she may be as I'd tell 'er to 'er face."

Tho' it's werry hawful when you comes to think as it may come 'ome to 'er some day when she's a-fancyin' it's all forgot, and pre'aps she'll be in a 'ome

as might be 'appy with children round 'er, as 'andsome as they say she was, but not sich devils 'arts, let's 'ope, and the blow may come thro' one on 'em, and pre'aps the one she doats on most, as'll be all smilin' and gay in 'er arms just afore goin' to bed, and be took with croup in the middle of the night.

Ah! I've knowed a case like that tho' the party were not Scotch, nor 'adn't done no murder, but she'd done the next wust thing—she'd left a fond and lovin' 'usban' with a fool as said he loved 'er better.

I shan't never forget bein' sent for in a 'urry by a friend of mine as kep' the 'otel where they was a-stoppin'.

Not but what we all thought as they was man and wife.

I got to that 'otel late, and was showed up to the lady as looked a deal whiter than the musling dressin'-gownd as she'd got on, and was a-bendin' over the bassinet, with 'er lovely 'air all down.

She starts up when I went in, and says, "They tell me you've great experience; look at 'im, tell me will he die."

I looked at the child, and see as there wasn't the slightest hopes, more thro' 'is breathin' than 'is looks.

I says to 'er, "He's werry bad."

"Oh, no," she says, "he's better—much better;

we've 'ad three physiccans, and the doctor here says 'is pulse is better."

I took the poor little dear in my arms, and says to 'er, "Don't fret for 'im," for he was a fine little boy as ever I see, but a-dyin' fast. I says, "It's no use deceivin' you, mum, he's a-goin' fast to 'is 'appy 'ome."

She give a shriek as brought a young gentleman into the room, as 'is eyes was bloodshot, and 'is 'air all wild.

He says, "What is it?"

She says, "Send this 'orrid old woman away; she's killin' baby."

I says to 'im, "Take the lady out of the room as can't bear the sight."

He says, "What sight?" and rushes to me.

I says, "This!" a-lookin' down at that dear little soul as was jest a-breathin' away from its little body.

I never 'eard a man give a more dreadful groan than 'im, as he rushed frantic like out of the room.

As to 'er, she was fainted dead away, and two maids was a-lookin' arter 'er on the sofy.

So as there wasn't nothink to be done, I give up the dear little body to 'is nurse, and was a-goin' away, when Mrs. Brittel, as kep' the 'ouse, says to me, "I wish you could stay and watch 'er to-night, for I'm sure she ain't safe to be left alone."

I says, "Surely 'er 'usban' is enough."

Jest then the waiter come up and told 'er as the gentleman 'ad ordered a fly, and was goin' to town as was only Richmond.

She says, "No doubt to fetch 'er mother, or some one to 'er."

So she says to me, "Do stop till he gets back."

So I says, "Certingly, tho' I don't think as she'll care to 'ave me about 'er."

She says, "Poor thing, she won't be sensible for a good bit."

Certingly when I went back to 'er she lay a-moanin' on 'er bed as tho' 'er senses was gone for ever.

They'd got 'er to bed, and the doctor come in, see 'er, but didn't give 'er nothink, only said she was to be kep' quiet, with constant rags and cold water to 'er 'ead.

It must 'ave been pretty nigh twelve o'clock as she woke up, and looked at me werry 'ard, but didn't say a word.

I offered 'er some drink, but she put it away werry gently, and then she says to me, "Please give me my small sachel," as were a-layin' on a table.

So I give it 'er in course, and says, "Take a little of this, ma'am."

She says, "What is it?"

I says, "What the doctor ordered?"

She shook 'er 'ead and says, "No! I'll take my own medicine presently."

She says, "Will you go and tell the gentleman, my—you know—that I want to see 'im."

I says, "I don't think as he've returned, but I'll ring and ask."

She didn't say anythink, and I never see 'er open that sachel, as she must 'ave done it while I rang the bell.

I asked 'em as answered the bell at the door if the gentleman was returned? and they said "No."

So I turns and tells the lady.

She says, "He's gone, is he? I knew it."

Her way was werry odd like, so I thought I'd 'ave 'er own nuss with me, and was a-goin' to ring the bell when she stopped me, and says, "I want to speak to you."

I went to 'er, and she clutched my 'and and said, "Don't move till I 'ave spoken."

She stopped and put 'er 'and to 'er side as tho' in pain; and then she said, "I am dyin'."

I was a-rushin' to the bell, for she turned such a colour, that I felt it was true what she'd said.

She says, "Too late, too late. I am dyin'. I did it myself. It is God's judgment on a wicked wretch," and then she gasped out what I 'ope was "mercy, mercy," twice.

I couldn't get away from 'er to ring the bell, so

called out so loud, as I was 'eard, and they come into the room, but all was over.

'Ow she pisoned 'erself I can't tell, no more couldn't the doctors neither, not as it mattered, for there was a end of 'er, and as to 'im, some one told me as he went over to Merryker and fought in them battles, and was killed, or died, or somethink, but I couldn't 'elp bein' sorry for 'im, for he was werry young, and all as I've got to say is, as when a married 'ooman goes off like that, I'm sure it must be 'er as give the encouragement.

Tho' it ain't for us to pass no judgments in them cases, but as to any one as commits a murder, why they did ought to be proved guilty, or else be let off as innocent, and not sent out with a thing like that a-stickin' to 'em, not as that fieldmale as I were a-speakin' about can complain, as is well married, and 'ad scores of offers, but I wouldn't 'ave 'er conscience nor yet 'er punishment, when that day comes, as there won't be no werdicts of non proven to save us.

They do say as some Scotch parents is werry strict, but all as ever I've know'd 'as been werry indulgent and kind, and in my opinion too many sweeties as they calls 'em, not but what I 'olds with children bein' indulged, so long as they ain't spilte, as is two werry different things.

The old lady where I lodged in Edinbro', she

give me a long account of 'er 'usband as 'ad been one of them sewere fathers as was a reg'lar old dragon, with 'is son as drove the boy away from 'ome, and wouldn't let 'is daughter marry the man as she loved.

That poor mother 'ad a nice time of it, a-pinchin' 'erself every way to send a trifle to that boy as 'ad enlisted, and were sent away to Ingy, and was obligated for to wink at 'er daughter's gettin' married on the sly, as was the best thing to be done under the circumstances, but that old father never would give in, nor look at 'is own child as come a widder to 'is door with two 'elpless children.

The poor old lady wep' bitter a-tellin' me about it, tho' many years ago, for she said it quite broke 'er 'art, not bein' able to bear to see 'er own flesh and blood with nothink but the poor'ouse before 'em, that cruel evenin' in November, as she come to the door, for they was a-livin' up near Aberdeen, as is a wild place, and bitter cold, with the snow a-fallin', and that old beast 'ad been out a-lookin' as 'is sheep was all right for the night, and 'ad jest come in when that poor creetur' come to the door, as he went to answer 'isself, and shet it in 'er face.

Well, that were too much for 'er, leastways I 'opes so, for any mother as ever were a mother.

So she says, "Are you a-goin' to turn 'er and the bairns," as is Scotch for children, "from your door?"

"Yes," says he, "and you open it to them at your peril."

So she says, "I looked at 'im werry 'ard," and says, "you mean it, my Joe," not as 'is name were Joe, but Alesander, as they calls Sandy in Scotch.

He says, "I do, and I've sworn to it."

She says, "Werry well," and not another word did she utter, but she give 'im 'is supper, but never took sup nor bit 'erself.

Then she went to 'er own room and just took 'er plaid and a few clothes, and the money as she could call 'er own, and went out by the kitchen door, and there she met 'im, as ordered 'er not to move, but she was made of the same tough stuff as 'im, and she defied 'im, and when he'd 'ave laid 'is 'and on 'er, bade 'im stand back at 'is peril, and went 'er way and found 'er daughter, as was dyin', and nussed 'er to the last, and brought up both them children, as is doin' well, and never set eyes on 'er 'usban' ag'in till he lay in 'is coffin, for he wouldn't 'ave 'er sent for tho' he knew he was a dyin' man, thro' bein' one of them as if he said a thing he'd stick to it right or wrong, as may be a fine character, but give me them as ain't quite so positive, as we did ought all to remember as we are but blind mortals as is only dust and hashes; but some of them Scotch is that firm as you might pick 'em to bits with red 'ot pinchers, and they'd never give in.

That's why they're such sojers as'll obey orders, and never draw back when they're told to go for'ard, as is all right so long as they don't carry it too far, 'cos it's foolishness for to go over a pressipitch just for the look of the thing, tho' warned of your danger, as is what I calls pride, as goes afore distraction, as the sayin' is.

I was werry much pleased with some of them sheep dogs up in the 'ighlands, as is remarkable clever.

It's downright wonderful 'ow them shepherds knows all the sheep, one by one, as 'ave their senses and ain't dumb, for I'm sure I couldn't never tell one from another if I lived with 'em all my life, tho' I certingly can tell a good leg of mutton from a bad one the moment I sets eyes on it, as is much the same thing, arter all.

But 'ow them dogs should know their own sheep it's wonderful, as ain't no judges of mutton, and will go arter one for days and never leaves the shepherd; even goes to 'is kirk with 'im on a Sunday, and will stop there asleep, enjoyin' the day of rest all the time, till the minister gives the blessin', and then rouses 'imself and the shepherd too, in a minit.

I can't say as I cares about porridge myself, and I should get tired of salmon if I lived there constant; but likes some of them dishes, partikler collops and kidney soup.

It's downright wonderful to 'ear old parties speak about the travellin', as did used to take weeks where it don't now take days, as shows what steam will do; and it's a wonder to me as they don't use it for to drag parties up some of them 'ills, as is that steep, and them shaggy ponies as they uses is little, ill-contrived brutes, as stubborn as mules, tho' werry sensible, and takes a deal of pride in showin' off the beautiful scenery, as they'll stop of their own accord at pints as is finest, and you can't get 'em on till you've looked, and it's the same with gentlemen's carriage-'orses, I've 'eard say.

Tho' I can't say as I cared about one view, as they took me up a 'igh 'ill to see on a pony, as was werry steep, for I never see nothink, thro' bein' all terror from the moment I got on, for fear as that little brute should go, and topple me over the side; for he would lag behind and pick up every bit of grass, as growed that near the hedge as he give me the creeps, and tho' he wasn't much 'igher than a footstool, yet must 'ave been uncommon strong and made nothink of me, and would, now and then, give a bit of a trot, to show 'ow light I was to 'im, as shook me pretty near to death.

At last I got that terrified with 'im a-goin' so near the pressipitch, that I calls out to a party in the name of Macphelin as was along with us, a remarkable fine man, and begs as he'd come and draw

that pony down the bank ag'in, as 'ad walked up one near as steep as a wall for to get a bunch of grass.

He, like a hidjot, come a-rushin' at the pony's 'ead, as give a twist as nearly sent me off.

So I 'ollers out, and Mr. Macphelin give me 'is 'and; but, some'ow, I were too far gone, and over the bank I went, pony and all, a-draggin' Macphelin over too.

It's a mercy as that hannimile didn't roll over me the same as Mr. Macphelin did, as pretty near crushed me, and goodness knows where I should 'ave rolled to, but for a big stone as I come bump ag'in, as checked me.

As to Mr. Macphelin, he was up like a lark, and 'ollered to me, as couldn't answer 'im for want of breath, but at last were able to set up and waive my umbreller to 'im.

When he come up he was a-yellin' like a Scotch maniac with larfture, and said as he must larf, tho' never a-believin' afore as there was any 'ooman as could pull 'im and a pony over together.

But I esplained to 'im, as it were thro' the side saddle, as in course throwed the weight all on one side of the pony, as 'ad took to 'is 'eels and lewanted, and a nice walk I 'ad 'ome, as comin' down 'ill shakes me to death.

I was in that rage with Brown, as kep' on a-

sayin' as I crushed the pony to such atomes as they couldn't find a bit on 'im, and as 'ow that the Society for the Cruelty of Hanimals would be down on me, let alone the damages he'd 'ave to pay to them as the pony belonged to.

I says, "I'll make 'em pay, a-darin' to put me on a brute as couldn't never 'ave been broke proper."

"Well," says Brown, "he's broke enough now;" and that grinnin' Macphelin, as 'ad a mouth like a letter-box wide open, kep' on a-bustin' out a-sayin' as the poor beast were to be pitied, and never a thought on my bruises, as they recommended me to rub with whiskey, as brought all the skin off, and my left arm were a sight thro 'em.

It certingly is wonderful to think as you can be up in London in twelve 'ours, and I must say as I'm thankful for steam, as I'm sure I never could 'ave got to Scotland without; for as to me a-ridin' all the way up behind Brown on a 'orse, I never could, as were the way as old Mrs. McDrawley's mother come when George the Fourth were a infant, as ain't so long ago arter all, and three weeks on the road, thro' a-stoppin' to sleep.

Certingly them mails trains travels wonderful, but nothink like Queen Wictoria, as goes along that quick that they're obligated to clear the line, for fear of any hitch, as there will be sometimes even in

Scotland, with a engine in front on her to knock everythink out of the way, and tons of hice piled up all over 'er 'ead, to keep her cool, as is 'ighly necessary in the dog days, and no doubt that's 'ow they can lay the dust for her, as, in course, the hice a-meltin' would trickle down for all the world like a steam water-cart all along the road, as only shows what can be done.

I must say as I'm glad to be 'ome and no bones broke, for certingly Scotland is a scramblin' up and down sort of a place, and I do think as to go and risk your life, jest to say as you've been up a 'igh 'ill, is downright fool'ardy, and only done out of bravo, as the sayin' is, and pre'aps to leave a wife and family behind.

As I says to Brown, "If you goes a-climbin' up them impossible places and meets your end like that, I'll never forgive you the longest day I lives, and shan't 'ave no respect for your memory, as couldn't be showed proper, and your body never found to give you no funeral, not as you need ever look for more than a 'earse and pair and two mournin' coaches at the outside, not as ever you'd see me out of black no more," tho' I will not promise perpetshal weeds, tho' some do consider 'em a safeguard, tho' I 'ave 'eard the remark as they're werry like 'avin' lodgin's to let in the winder.

But, law bless me, I don't want no more

'usban's, and only 'opes as the one as I've got may be spared many year; for, I'm sure, if he was took, with all 'is faults, I should never 'old up my 'ead ag'in, nor yet think of goin' about nowheres, not even in Cook's escursions, as is like a 'appy 'ome.

THE END.

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Mrs. Brown at the Sea-side.

BY

ARTHUR SKETCHLEY,

AUTHOR OF "THE BROWN PAPERS."

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MRS. BROWN AT THE SEA-SIDE.

EVER since that time as I were, I may say, and no falsehood neither, decoyed down by Brown them eight 'ours at Brighton, I've always set my face agin the sea.

Not as it isn't no doubt a 'olesome thing to some constitutions, tho' I've know'd a many as the werry smell on it made that bilious as Cockle's wouldn't relieve, nor not even baked lemons as 'ave been know'd to cure the jaunders to my certing knowledge, and all thro' a gipsy 'ooman a-tellin' 'er of it as was a-sellin' cabbage-nets and skewers down the Bagnige-Wells Road, as was Mrs. Orsley's own aunt, as come to answer the door 'erself as yaller as a guinea, and that put out bein' brought down to the door, thro' the gal bein' gone to fetch the shoulder o' mutton from the baker's as were washin' day, and then only to see a tramp with a babby in 'er arms the colour of pickled walnut juice,

as they've been know'd to steep the young nobility in when stole away from their 'appy 'omes, 'as turned up advanced in life and swore to by 'is old nuss thro' moles as she could indemnify, tho' not wisible to the naked eye, but can't be unbeknown to them as 'ave washed 'em in infancy.

So Mrs. Orsley's aunt, as 'er name were Turner by the second 'usband, she come to the door a-speakin' pretty sharp, as couldn't abear the sight of a gipsy thro' bein' brought up in the country as no 'en-roost ain't safe from nor yet a bit of linen as you may put out to bleach thro' likin' it to be a good colour and whipped off the grass in a jiffey by 'em.

So she says, "Go along, you waggerbone," 'uffy like, and slams the door, leastways were a-goin' to, when the gal come up sudden with the bakin' on a tray, as was sent flyin' backards, mutton and all, and a mercy as the 'ot grease only fell over the pot-boy's legs and not 'is arms, as were bare with bringin' round the one o'clock beer, as is a thing as nobody couldn't stand at the wash-tub without by the 'our together, as was the end of Mrs. Malins, thro' 'er legs a-flyin' as will give way when least expected, the same as my Pembroke table as 'ad belonged to my dear mother's mother, and a well-made bit of furniture, but in course couldn't be expected to stand agin two bricklayer's labourers a-standin' on it to whitewash with my back turned

and found it out by the marks of their feet as might 'ave 'appened at meal-time, and a nice smash of everything.

Well, I was a sayin' that gipsy 'ooman she were a forgivin' temper, and told Mrs. Turner about the baked lemons being good for the jaunders as cured 'er entire, tho' a kite's foot for colour to 'er dyin' day, but not no more of them agonies as did use to bend 'er double, and couldn't straiten 'erself for love or money, and took doctor's stuff by the gallon, as I will never believe but that calomel tea as she took wasn't too strong for the stomach, as is a medicine I never did 'old with, thro' never bein' one for drenchin'.

So Brown he says to me, "I tell you what it is, Martha, them rheumatic pains of yours would fly like chaff before the wind at the sea-side."

I says, "Brown, I've 'eard say as the wind is that wiolent at the sea-side as 'ave been know'd to carry parties over the cliffs as easy as kiss your 'and, the same as Mrs. Peters as went down to Broadstairs along with 'er married daughter and the children, and was a settin' on the rocks with a gig umbreller up thro' the sun bein' enough to pierce 'er brain, and was took clean off 'er legs thro' a 'oldin' on to that umbreller, and carried out to sea with a wiolent squall that sudden as she'd never 'ave been missed but for 'er son a-wantin'

the umbreller as he see a floatin' out, with 'is mother a-clingin' on to it like barnacles, as they calls 'em, to a ship's bottom; as is the reason why I never fancies mussels, thro' a whole family as were pisoned in the Isle of Wight, as is nothin' but a mask of copperass, as may be easy proved in bilin' 'em down with a silver spoon, as in course they wasn't born with, as the sayin' is, thro' only bein' a labourin' man, as isn't likely to leave no plate in the family.

"So I've always 'ad a dread of the sea, tho' I well remembers Mrs. Enty, as were my brother's aunt thro' marriage, as 'ad bathin' machines at Margate, and was there myself; for when quite a child, thro' swelled glanders, and did used to sleep n a room with a little 'ouse made of shells on the mantelpiece, and did used to pick up pennywinkles on the rocks for tea by the gallon, but never was in a boat thro' my aunt bein' that timbersome of me a goin' over the side, as wasn't strong on my feet till my wisdom-teeth was cut, as is often the case with them as is put down too soon, pertikler when 'eavy and never a child to crawl."

So Brown says, "Stop it; I don't want no more of your birth, parentage, and education, but jest make up your mind whether you'll go to Margate or not."

I says, "Not if I'm a goin' to be 'urried and

put upon, as will require three days to get me ready; for," I says, "I shall be fried alive on the sea-side without a cool dress to my back, for I don't believe as either of them muslings as is put away rough dried at the top of the cupboard where I keeps the linen will ever meet round me, besides flounces bein' gone out altogether, let alone seein' whether Mrs. Challin can come to take care of the 'ouse, and Miss Pinkerton, for two days at the werry least, to get my things ready, as tho' not by no means the mantymaker as I should like, yet answers my purpose at eighteenpence a day and 'er wittles, as ain't much of a appetite; for tho' I can't never forget the way as she be'aved to me, yet couldn't but pity when I come to 'ear as she was drove to work for 'er bread, and only twopence 'apenny apiece for making a full-fronted shirt, as is enough to bring a judgment on the slop-shop as she worked for, and should, too, if I 'ad my way with such wile blood-suckers."

Brown didn't say no more but, "Toosday next as ever is, boat or rail as you likes."

So, when I comes to think as this were Friday, I begun to feel as the grass must grow under my feet, so sends the gal off for Miss Pinkerton that werry moment, and, as luck would 'ave it, ketched 'er with 'er bonnet on a-goin' to that slop-shop for to ask for work, bein' drove to it with 'er rent

a-owin', and been livin' on tea and a egg for weeks.

She never was a beauty, thro' a broken nose, with a squint, as come from pitchin' 'eadlong down the kitchen stairs when fust runnin' alone, as there did ought to 'avè been a gate to, or else no peace in the 'ouse night nor day with a young family.

But when I see 'er come in along with Matilda wore to skelingtons, with no more strength than a rat, I was downright shocked; and tho' I'd 'ad my tea earlier that arternoon thro' Brown a-bein' all of a fidget to get out, I didn't pretend to but made 'er a cup, and sent out for a new French roll and a bit of cold 'am from round the corner, as was nice and tender tho' cut low, and she did relish it uncommon to be sure, and put 'er in that sperrits as she set to at once a rippin' that skirt off the pink musling, as is a curlin' shell pattern with a white stripe, as costs me twelve and sixpence in the Boro' Road the summer afore, and would 'ave looked elegant only Mrs. Polling spilte it with 'er beastly cut, as is as obstinate as a pig and as stupid as a donkey over a bit of work.

I could 'ave swore if I'd been a gentleman, when I see myself fust in that musling as was set in the gethers all crooked and the shells upside down, and because I says to 'er, "If you call that a fit, Mrs. Polling, I don't," bounced out of the 'ouse

a-bangin' the door arter 'er, as tho' 'eaven and hearth 'ad come together, and shook a pane of glass out of the fan-light, as splintered all over the passage, and might 'ave brought on lock-jaw thro' Brown bein' in the constant 'abit o' takin' off 'is boots on the mat, and a-walkin' in 'is stockin' feet to the stairs where 'is slippers is put, as don't like 'em close to the door for fear as he might fall over 'em a-comin' unawares.

I must say as both them muslings looked werry dressy, pertikler the blue, if that beast of a gal as were trusted to smooth it out 'adn't been and done it without wipin' the iron.

I'd got a nice spotted musling pelerine, and when I'd done up my black silk cape as looked like new when washed with a drop of gin, tho' it give it a red shade as I think must 'ave been thro' the iron bein' too 'ot, I was all ready. I thought as I never should 'ave my bonnet 'ome in time as I sent to be cleaned and trimmed up by Mrs. Gorley, as is in that line close by Lambeth Walk, and might 'ave a Regent Street business but for 'er brute of a 'usband as ain't never sober from Monday mornin' to Sunday night, and 'ave took the pledge over and over agin.

I couldn't get that bonnet out o' my 'ead all Sunday a-thinkin' as it never could be ready by Monday night, as Mrs. Gorley 'ad promised me

faithful she'd do 'er very best for to 'ave it, and kep' 'er word faithful tho' past ten when that boy come up to the door with it in a wicker basket as were lined with black glazy stuff.

Well, you know, bein' all of a 'urry I put down that bonnet for the minnit out of my 'and on a chair while I was a-lookin' for twopence for to give the boy for 'isself; and when I come back into the room there was Brown a-settin' on that werry identical chair, 'avin' jest come in a-sayin' as a peg in the 'eel of 'is boot 'ad been a givin' 'im misery all the way 'ome.

I says to 'im, "Wherever did you put my bonnet, Brown?"

He says, "What bonnet?"

I says, "Why the one as the boy 'ave jest brought 'ome;" and then exclaims, "Why, if you ain't a-settin' on it!" for I see the strings a-'angin' down under 'im.

You never see sich a pancake as he'd made on it. I thought as my 'art would bust, and if he didn't say as it looked all the better for it.

I thought wear it I never could, but Miss Pinkerton as I was a-goin' to give a bed to so as to 'ave 'er 'elp early in the mornin', thro' 'earin' me scream come a-runnin' down, and werry soon made it all right, as comes of 'avin' 'em flat shapes, for if it 'ad been my Leghorn no 'uman 'and couldn't

never 'ave made it look decent agin, for Brown must be sixteen stun if he's a ounce as comes 'eavy on a bonnet, pertikler 'im a-throwin' 'isself a dead weight on to that chair with 'is 'eel.

It was past twelve afore either me or Miss Pinkerton got to bed thro' me a-wishin' to 'ave everythink packed over night, and I'm sure my box was as good as new thro' bein' one of them as is covered with paper and a arch top with black iron clamps for to 'old it at the corners.

I took and fresh papered that box inside with newspapers, and covered the outside with a bit of the parlour paper, as is red roses on.

When I'd got in everythink into that box as I were a-goin' to take, it was that full as shet it wouldn't, tho' me and Miss Pinkerton set on it while the gal was a-tryin' to turn the key with all 'er might.

As to Brown, he were a-snorin', and wouldn't 'ave got up not to lock up the Bank of England, as the sayin' is.

I must say as I 'eard that box give a crack while a-settin' on it myself, but wasn't sure, and in the mornin' it seemed all right when we was a-tyin' it up with the clothes-line, but go into the lock that 'asp wouldn't, for all our pushin' and drivin'.

So when the cab come as Mrs. Challin 'ad been and fetched I says to the cabman, "Jest be so good

as to put your knee on the lead of this box as won't lock."

He says, "Won't it? I'll soon settle that." And if he didn't take and kneel on it that wiolent, for all the world like a demented helephant, as will kneel anythink to death, as I've 'eard say, in its fury, and crack went the lead like a rocket a-goin' off.

I says, "You've done for it now."

"Oh," he says, "it don't signify about lockin' it. I'll draw the cords tighter," and so he did, a-sayin' as I might keep my eye on it all the way as we was a-goin' by the boat, as leaves at ten.

In course Brown 'ad gone on fust, and was to meet me aboard the steamer, as I were glad on, for he's such a worret and fidget at startin' as nearly drives me mad. So at last I got off, tho' much flustered, for the door of that cab was that narrer as I never should 'ave got into it, only thro' the cabman a-openin' the oppersite door and a-'awlin' at me while the others prized me up.

I wouldn't 'ave went by it only thro' bein' late, and I must say as the man was that dawdlin' in 'is drivin' as we never should 'ave been in time if I 'adn't let down the front winder and a-kep' on proggin' at 'im in the back with my umbreller, as made 'im forget 'isself frightful in 'is langwidge, as I didn't mind thro' my 'urry to get there, and I

don't think as we 'ad over two minnits to ten when the cab drawed up, and them fellers in their pinbefores as calls theirselves porters come and grabbed the boxes.

I was that flustered as I didn't 'ardly know what I was a-doin', and says, "Margate boat," and no more, and off them fellers rushed, a-carryin' all before them.

I overpaid that cabman frightful, in my fears as they'd been and collared the lot, and away I 'urries arter them and rushes aboard the steamer and dropped onto a seat a-pantin' for breath like a overflowed bird,

When I 'eard a woice esclaim, "'Allo, Martha, where are you off to?" I turns, and sees Brown on board of a steamer as was next door like.

So I says, "Goin' to? Why, Margate, of course."

He says, "If you stops aboard there, you'll be took across the water."

"What!" I says; "kidnapped into foreign parts agin my will? Never!" I says.

So them porters as was aboard the boat with Brown says, "Come on, Missis, step over."

I says, "Over what?"

"Why," says Brown, "get on that seat. Any one will give you a leg up, and you'll be over like a bird."

Well, I ain't one to clamber nor climb in a general way, as is bold in a fieldmale, so I 'esitates; but Brown says, "The boat's off."

So on to the seat I scrambles, and manages to get my leg over the side o' the two boats, for they was a-layin' side by side, paralitic, as the sayin' is.

I 'adn't 'ardly got my leg over 'arfway when the boat begun to move.

I give a scream as must 'ave been 'eard for miles. Brown made a grab at me by the harm. Some one behind give me a shove—friendly, no doubt, but that wiolent as sent me flyin' slap aboard the other boat with that wiolence as must 'ave been my death thro' comin' in collusion with anythink solid; but, as luck would 'ave it, I pitched on to a sailor's back in a blue Jersey, as were a-stoopin' doin' up some ropes, as broke my fall, tho' it's a mercy we didn't both on us roll over into the engines, as would 'ave crushed us to instant death.

I never did 'ear worse langwidge than what that young sailor used, as I says to 'im, "You did ought to be ashamed of yourself a-usin' such expressions afore ladies," I says, "and I wonder you ain't afraid to a-goin' to sea as you are, as is enough to bring a judgment on you, wessel and all, as is a awful thing to think about on the bottomless deep; and," I says, "as to me a-'urtin' you it's down-

right rubbish and fancy, for I'm sure I shouldn't 'ave knocked a fly off."

"Well, then," he says, a-rubbin' 'is back, "it would 'ave been a four-wheeled fly," as set all them idjots a-grinnin', and I was that aggrawated with Brown, as would pay them blood-suckers in pinbefores, as I calls 'em, fourpence a package down to the camp-stool and my umbreller, as they took out of my 'and in my fluster, as it is wilful falsehoods to call luggage.

I was that shook by the fall, with my 'ooks and eyes bust out up my back, that I was obligated to go down with the stewardess for to be set to rights.

A werry nice lady that stewardess were, thro' bein' a widder and 'ad buried seven poor things, and all under five years old, as is a 'ard trouble to a mother as will fret for a infant more than p'r'aps is necessary, and not 'eave a sigh over a whole ship load gone to the bottom, tho' in course blood is thicker than water, as the sayin' is.

I could 'ave set all day along with that stewardess as 'ad only rared three out of ten as fine babbies as ever was born; indeed, too fine, and choked theirselves with their own fat, as requires more care than the peeky ones, 'specially in teethin', as is a 'ard trial to any child, let alone their mothers, as 'ave 'ad to walk the room all the night

thro,' as Mrs. Ornby did, and then 'ad 'im grow up to shy a pint pot at 'er, as is artless blackness in any son to turn out that ungrateful to a mother's sorrers, as no soothin' serups won't allay, nor yet launching the gums, as I've know'd give relief; not as it's a thing as I 'olds with, as is apt to 'arden 'em in 'ealin', and 'ave know'd conwulsions to set in.

I don't think as ever I did relish anythink more than a bottle of ginger beer, with the least drop in it to take off the sweetness, as won't never squench thirst.

It was ever so long afore I went on deck agin, as was werry pleasant, I must say, with a breeze a-blowin' and the band a-playin' as makes the time pass that agreeable, and werry different to the time when parties was days a-gettin' to Margate thro' goin' in a Hoy, as it were called, and the fust families in the land a-goin' by it, the same as I 'ave 'eard say as Mrs. Wittles' father did used to as were twice Lord Mayor thro' King George the Third a-comin' to the City along with Queen Charlotte, as were remarkable plain and give to snuff, thro' bein' of the German persuasion, and a-settin' with their crowns on their 'eads and knighted 'im on the spot, tho' they do say as it were arter dinner, but didn't prove no joke, for I well remember 'is widder, as were called Lady Blather's to the day of

'er death, and always went to Margate by the Hoy, regular as I can jest remember myself a-seein' 'em in the river, and was run down thro' steamboats a-comin' in as is frightful dangerous, and knocked my dear aunt over the side of a barge, as kept the ferry 'ouse near Erith Church, and was pertikler fond of being a-board on the water, and went to fill the kettle jest as the steamer come by, never thinkin' of no danger thro' bein' 'ard of 'earin', and the fust steamer as ever run to Margate and come on 'er that sudden as nobody wasn't aware on in them days, a-comin' so quick and must 'ave been drownded but for 'er gownd a-ketchin' in the rullock as 'eld 'er up by the 'eel, till she was drawed out with a 'itcher as was kep' for the purpose, but give 'er a shock as she never 'eld up 'er 'ead agin; not as ever she did, not to say properly, thro' a weak back bone as she'd 'ad from a child; but as to them Hoys, they was as bad as a man-of-war for sea-sickness I've 'eard say, and nobody went aboard 'em without preparin' theirselves for the worst; and 'ave been know'd to be wrecked off Greenithe, as is a wild spot on the Essex side, thro' bein' all one mash with hague a-ragin' at every point, as nothink ain't finer for than old port took reg'lar, and bark whilst fastin'.

I can't say as ever I fancies the sea myself, and would 'ave gone by the train only it's a savin', and

Brown enjoys 'is pipe with a glass of stout on deck, and is such a man for to go about with, thro' knowin' everythink, for I'm sure all the years as I've been 'is wife I never asked 'im a question that I didn't get a answer; and wherever he gets it all from I can't make out, and was a real pleasure to 'ear 'im talk to them sailors, as I could see quite looked up to 'im jest for all the world as if he'd been a admirable.

I do not 'old with 'avin' of that old wessel a-layin' off Greenwich for a 'ospital, as might be werry well for the drownded, but so much dampness must be bad for sickness, as I've known even wettin' the boards bring on the harysipilis, and once get that into a sick ward and nice work you'll 'ave with it, as carried off old Mrs. Arbottle in no time, as must 'ave been looked for at ninety-three, as is a great hage one must allow.

There wasn't werry much to look at arter Gravesend, as did used to be the hite of fashion once, and well I remember Alderman Wittles's family as were a drysalter by trade, tho' quite the gentleman, and every Sunday in summer a-goin' to Gravesend, and Mrs. Wittles she doated on srimps, as she'd bring 'ome in a cotton bag, and not a bit of pride about 'er, and was werry much put out with Master Fred, 'er eldest, as give 'isself hairs about bein' seen a-carryin' 'em, and took and 'id

'em in the umbreller, as he 'ad to put up in a 'urry thro' a sudden shower, and nearly drownded 'is ma with srimps, as some on 'em got down 'er back, and undressed 'er myself the moment as she got 'ome, and never see sich irritation in my life, as was enough to aggrawate any one, let alone the loss of the srimps, as is always a relish, but in course was every one lost.

I well remembers when sea-bathin' was beautiful at Gravesend, and only one peer in the place; and 'ave 'eard say as it was once a lonesome spot enough, where the Ingymen did used to lay off a-waitin' for the wind, as is often werry contrairy, but was a good thing for the innkeepers, as makes good the sayin' as it's a ill wind as blows nobody any good, as I'm sure the wind didn't as blowed in our back-washus winder and all the slates off like a pack of cards, a-scatterin' them all over the place; and tore up the water-butt by the roots, as fell on the dog-kennel, and would 'ave killed the poor dog if he 'adn't broke 'is chain 'ours afore, and got thro' the palins arter Mrs. Archbut's cat next door, as was a beastly thief, as he'd pretty soon 'ave worried to death, only she jumped on the wall with 'er tail like a bottle-brush, a-swearin' at 'im for all the world like a Christian.

But as I was a-sayin', Gravesend was a grand place once, thro' bein' the same as Tilbury Fort, as

is jest oppersite, as was Queen Elizabeth's pallis, where she rode down them Spanish armaders as come agin 'er, as I've seen 'er myself in the Tower of London, as is waxwork, for all the world like livin' death, as the sayin' is; not as she's a woman as Brown can keep 'is temper over thro' callin' 'er a tyrant, as cut off 'er own mother's 'ead, and boxed 'er 'usband's ears for turnin' 'is back on 'er, tho' she never would own to 'im as a 'usband for fear of jealousy, as must 'ave been wild times; and them maids of 'oner as did used to stand round 'er throne with them long pikes, as you may see in the Tower, as they'd run into one another when words run too 'igh, as they will do, and end in blows, as must 'ave been death on the spot wherever they was 'it.

There was a werry nice dinner aboard that steamer, as I calls a biled leg of mutton and a roast line of pork, with summer cabbage and peas, and green gooseberry pies as was that acid thro' a-gettin' nearly ripe; and in all my life I never tasted a better cheese, tho' the reddishes was as big as 'apenny balls, and the lettices run werry much up the middle, as makes 'em all stalk and bitter as sut.

They certingly do 'ave lovely bottled stout aboard them boats, and altogether, what with 'avin' a little somethin' 'ot along with Brown, I never

did enjoy a meal more, not as I altogether liked Brown a-sayin' as I'd been and dipped my beak into 'is grog pretty deep, and makin' parties grin, as is like their manners, as ain't behaviour for to poke your nose into any one else's conversation.

I never know'd till Brown was a-tellin' me as we set on that deck about the new ways as they've got of makin' guns as they was a-tryin' on, as'll carry far beyond the naked eye, as seems werry awful to think on, for you might be shot dead in a instant ever so far off and never know as a gun 'ad been fired within miles of you, let alone never findin' out who done it, as in course is a satisfaction even tho' it should be brought in accidental death, the same as they did about poor Mr. Mackey, as fell out of winder, as is well know'd as she give 'im a shove thro' bein' 'is second, and a wile temper with everythink settled on 'er, but never enjoyed it, for I've seen 'er myself turn that white if ever a winder were alluded to as shows a bad conscience, as she must 'ave 'ad to go and leave it all to a 'ospital, with 'er own flesh and blood a-walkin' about without shoes and stockin', as I don't consider a Christian act in any woman as never did nothink to offend 'er, but that's not my business.

I didn't think much of Urn Bay, as was built by a grocer's widder as kep' the "Goldin Urn" out somewheres over the water and was named

accordin', and speaks well for 'er thro' not bein' ashamed of 'er 'usband's trade.

The sea was a-gettin' a little rubustikle arter we lef' that Bay where some 'ad gone ashore, and glad I was when we run into Margate, as 'arf a 'our more would 'ave upset my apple-cart as Brown called it.

Why ever they stops them steamers so far off the land I can't think, and I says to Brown, "'Ow-ever are we to get the things up all that way?" as said, "They'll be took up on a tramway."

It was 'ard work for me to walk all along what they calls the jetty, and glad I was when we got to the end, leastways should 'ave been if I 'adn't see a sight as took my breath away, for there was my box with the bottom out a-layin' a downright wreck, and lots of things a-bulgin' out, with a odd boot and a 'air brush as 'ad fell out together, as no doubt was all them waggerbones doin' as 'ad brought it up, as kep' on a-sayin' as any one must be a fool to travel with such a box jest as I came up.

I says, "Escüse me, but bein' that fool myself I wants to know what you calls yourself a-destroyin' any one's property in cold blood like that, and then a-givin' them nothink but cheek for their pains?"

It's lucky as I'd tied up that box with a extra

clothes line, or there wouldn't 'ave been a west-ment left.

I got it put on a barrer, and off me and Brown started to where we was a goin' for lodgin's, as was a pilot's widder near the fort as they calls it, but bless you, when we got there, as were a friend of Mrs. Marchmont, as is the corn-chandler round our corner, Mrs. Aslem as were the name, come to the door and says, "I couldn't take in Queen Wictoria, I'm that full."

I says, "But not bein' Queen Wictoria, I do not look to your fust-floor, but one bed-room and a parlour would suit."

She says, "I couldn't give you a turn-up bed under the dresser, nor I don't think as you'll find sich accommodation in all Margate to-night, as is that full thro' fifteen thousand a-comin' by the boats, let alone the rail."

I says, "What fifteen thousand in them two boats? they couldn't 'old 'arf the number."

She says, "I mean since the first, as is now three weeks ago and more."

I says, "Pray tell me where I could get a cup of tea and a rest, for I'm a-droppin' with 'eat and downright parched."

She says, "Believe me or believe me not, I couldn't even ask you to set on the stairs; but," she says, "there's Mrs. Busby as 'ave got a

bed I know if it ain't been took in the last ten minnits."

I says, "Where does she live?"

She says, "Round the corner, close agin where you landed at fust."

So off we starts; but Mrs. Busby she said she could let fifty beds if she 'ad 'em over and over agin.

I says, "Whatever can be done?"

She says, "I can't say."

I says, "Can't you recommend any one?"

She says, "I never recommends nobody; but," she says, "there's lodgin's I'm told up 'Igh Street."

I says, "Let's go there," tho' bein' a-droppin'; and the party as was along with the luggage said as many families 'ad been obligated to sleep in the bathin' machines, and evenin the church—as give me the 'orrors the bare thought on.

I'm sure if we went to one place we went to a dozen, at last we come to some small 'ouses where the donkey-chaises stands in front, and the party as was a-wheelin' the things said as he know'd one 'ouse round the corner, so on we went.

Whatever that party meant by jest round the corner I can't think, for it was a good 'arf-mile if a inch afore we come to the little 'ouse as was a washywoman lookin' sort of a place, but I was that

done as a pig-stye would have seemed a pallis to me.

I never did see a bigger sloven than the woman as come to the door, and I must say as I were put out altogether, for Brown 'ad kep' on at me all the way about not 'avin' wrote afore'and to let Mrs. Murdoch 'ave know'd as would 'ave kep' anythink for us, leastways so she said, not as I believed 'er, and turned out a double-faced character thro' promisin' us the rooms as soon as they was wacant and then let 'em over our 'eads under our noses without a word.

While we was a-talkin' to the woman of the 'ouse at the door, some other parties come a-askin' for bed-rooms, so we was glad to ketch at the one she'd got, tho' the top o' the 'ouse, and bakin' 'ot, just under the slates, as was suffocatin'.

I was too knocked up to relish my tea, but arter a bit I felt better.

So Brown and me dawdled down to the sea, and there we set ever so long, 'im a-smokin' and me downright a-dreadin' that bed-room, and not quite comfortable at leavin' all my things in that box with the bottom out in a strange place.

The woman 'ad give us a cup of tea in the parlour, thro' the lodgers bein' gone to Pegwell Bay, but espected 'ome to supper. So, knowin' as we couldn't 'ave a meal there, me and Brown got

some cold 'am and bottled ale at werry nice refreshment-rooms, and kep' out as late as we could, as was on the stroke of eleven.

I thought as I could 'ave slept on pavin'-stones, thro' bein' that tired, and must say as the bed we got was quite as 'ard as pavin'-stones, and not so even. There was lumps like cannon-balls in it, and it was too short for Brown, and full narrer.

It was one of them tent-beds, as I always doubts myself, and wouldn't 'ave at a gift, but I didn't wait to think about nothink, but gets to bed as quick as ever I could.

Brown, as usual, was all snores afore the light were out, tho' obligated to 'ave a chair at the bottom of the bed to lengthen it to his feet, with my shawl over 'em, thro' bein' one as can't sleep chilly.

I've 'eard speak of Harper Twelvetrees, as was Queen Wictoria's own destroyer, and kep' the beds all right at the Pallis, as can't be no use in sich a 'ouse as that; but if he'd come to Margate he'd soon 'ave 'is 'ands full, and plenty of practice, for never in my days did I see sich a sight as that tent bedstead when I'd been in it 'arf-a-'our and struck a light and give a look round.

Brown is one of them as might be bit by tigers all night and never feel it, but I can't sleep a wink if even I fancies as there's one about the bed, and I'm sure there must 'ave been millions.

As to killin' 'em it was not to be thought on, so I gets up and put on a shawl, and set a-dosin' with the light a-burnin' all till daylight, and then dosed off a bit, mornin' bein' come as drives 'em away, but when I woke felt more dead than alive.

I wasn't fit to be seen when I come to look in the glass, and I'm sure my own mother wouldn't 'ave know'd me. But I'd 'ave looked over everythink but that woman's impidence, as downright brazened it out as I must 'ave brought the wermin with me, and says, "I never will take in no more casuals, as that old busted box of yourn is no doubt a-swarmin'."

I says, "Mum, it comes out of a place as you might eat off."

"Yes," she says, "I might if I was a-starvin'. But," she says, "you dare and take away my 'ouse's character, and I'll punish you, as is a party I know'd wasn't fit for respectable lodgin's the moment I set eyes on you, as ain't no better than a couple of tramps."

Brown he come in jest then, and shet 'er up pretty quick, a-tellin' me to get my things together and we'd start, as he brought a man with a barrer for 'em, and so we did; and I do believe as that woman would 'ave sauced us to the last, only Brown kep' a-givin' 'er one of 'is looks, as seemed to stagnate 'er tongue, and the way as she banged the

door arter us was enough to bring it off the 'inges.

And werry nice lodgin's Brown 'ad found a-facin' the sea, as were kep' by Mrs. Parfitt, as 'er 'usband is beknown to Brown thro' bein' on the railway, as keeps 'im constant from 'ome, and would be lonesome for 'er thro' 'avin' no family; leastways only one son as 'ave turned out wild, and been gone out to Australier these five year, and never writes a line to 'is poor mother, as is 'art-broken over it, and 'ave sent 'im all the money as she could save, as she did used to tell me with tears in 'er eyes.

It was a pretty 'ouse, and me and Brown 'ad the parlours, and only a lady and 'er son on the fust floor as injoyed delicate 'ealth, as the sayin' is.

I never see a more willin' woman than Mrs. Parfitt for to please 'er lodgers, and I'm sure never touched nothink as belonged to 'em down to a bone of cold mutton; but she wasn't no cook, and of all the fried fish as ever I did see, it was a whitin' as she was a sendin' up to the fust floor, as 'adn't no appetite, and down it come agin untouched, as might be espected nat'ral.

I never see any one more put out than Mrs. Parfitt, for she says he's a inwalid as reminds me of my poor feller as was far from strong, and I'd do anythink in the world for to tempt 'is appetite.

"Well, then," I says, "don't send 'im up a whitin' as black as the grate, and not egged and crumbed, a-swimmin' in its own grease, as is enough to turn the stomach of a dog as is out of sorts."

So she says, "I wish as I could do it better, but am no cook beyond bilin' and roastin', and the woman as used to come in and 'elp with the cookin' is in the 'ospital with a scald thro' a tippin' the fryin'-pan over 'er feet, and 'ot fat will burn to the bone, and pertikler with black worsted stockin's on."

"Well," I says, "if you'll let me try, I think as I can fry a whitin' for 'im as 'e'll fancy;" so I set to, and pretty soon showed 'er 'ow a whitin' did ought to be sent up, and arter that many times I'd toss a little somethink off for 'im, as I did feel for thro' bein' only jest twenty, and took out in a Bath-chair every day, and 'is poor mother a-walkin' by the side on it a-'oldin' 'is 'and, as didn't seem to 'ave the strength of a fly 'erself.

We was werry comfortable, me and Brown, for I always went to market myself, and cooked the bit of dinner; leastways looked to it, for the gal as Mrs. Parfitt kep' was a reg'lar born nat'ral, as most of them country gals is, tho' uncommon artful.

Often when I went to market I'd bring in somethink as I thought that poor young man up-stairs might fancy, and 'is mother were that nice-spoken

lady as would move in passin' at first, but then took to speakin'.

She was werry 'opeful about 'er son, as she said 'ad overworked 'isself, but only wanted to get up 'is strength.

I says, "What did you bring 'im 'ere for, mum?" for he'd a cough as sounded dreadful 'oller, as I've 'eard say as Margate is bad for.

So she says, "Oh, the doctor said it was the place for 'im."

I says, "Oh, indeed," a-thinkin' to myself as that doctor were either a rogue or a fool, for some is only tryin' to get rid of their patients, or else don't know what's the matter with 'em, not but what I see with 'arf a eye as it was consumption all over the fust time as ever I spoke to 'im, and from that time we always 'ad a few friendly words when he was a-goin' out or comin' in jest in passin'.

We'd been a week in Margate when Brown says to me one night, "Martha, whatever is the use of your comin' 'ere for the sea, and not been in it yet?"

I says, "In course not, as is a bad thing for to rush into 'eadlong the moment you arrives; besides," I says, "I means to take a 'ot one fust."

"Well," he says, "take it any'ow as'll draw the pain out of your bones," as I said I would the last thing some night and then 'urry 'ome and into bed directly.

It was a Thursday I think, tho' not sure, that I told Mrs. Parfitt as I were a-goin' to 'ave it, and she says, "Let me send word and bespeak it for you at nine o'clock, punctual," as I agreed to, for Brown he'd gone over to Ramsgate and would not be back till the last train.

The weather was uncommon close, not to say 'ot, and I'd been a-settin' out a deal all day and must say as I felt sleepy as night drawed on, and didn't take nothink arter my tea thro' a-knowin' as it is not 'ealthy for to take a bath close on your meals.

I went over to that bath jest on nine, leastways so Mrs. Parfitt says, and were no sooner in it than I don't seem to remember nothink more only dreams, and a-thinkin' as I were aboard the steamboat a-talkin' to that stewardess as all of a sudden ketched 'old on me and let me slip overboard quite gentle, and the water struck warm and pleasant like; and then I thought as I was in a boat as 'ad sprung a leek and the sailors was a-'ammerin' away at it to try and mend it, and then I 'eard 'em shout, and the boat I know was a-sinkin' tho' they didn't say so, but I felt as the water were a-gainin' on me and I fought agin it with all my might and main, down I went and up I came, and as I got to the top I 'eard woices and a row and I 'ollers 'elp and come to myself, and if I 'adn't been and fell asleep in that

bath, and they was all a-'ammerin' at the door for to wake me, and it's a mercy as I woke as I did, or I might 'ave slipped under water and been found drowned; and the bath was as cold as charity, as the sayin' is, and of all the colds as ever I did 'ave I think it was thro' takin' that 'ot bath; not as it stuck by me more than a day or two, as the fine hair soon took away, and that widder lady on the fust floor she give me some French serup as eased my cough in no time.

"Ah," she says, "I got it for my poor boy, but it don't seem to give 'im no ease."

I says, "P'r'aps 'is cough is constitutional, as don't matter, as I knowed a party myself as 'ad one from the month up to eighty-four, and then died of somethink else."

"Oh," she says, quite quick, "he ain't likely not to shake it off werry soon, for the doctor says it's only the throat."

I says, "Oh, indeed," and turned the subject, for fear as I might let slip my opinions, as in course she did not ask, and while there's life there's 'ope, as the sayin' is, so I wished 'er a good mornin', for I'd promised as I'd take a ride out in a shay along with Mrs. Arbutt, as is a old acquaintance, tho' never a woman as I took to, tho' I did use to deal with 'er in the general line, close agin Limehouse church, as I come upon unawares at Margate, as

'ad buried Arbutt, and come every year with no family only a niece to the sea-side.

I'd promised as I'd be with 'er by eleven at the latest, so 'urries on and got to 'er gate just ten minnits past, and there she was a-settin' in a donkey shay, a-waitin', dressed out like a reg'lar fairy queen for feathers and furbelows.

As soon as she see me, she says, "Mrs. B., punctstiality is the efferwesence of business."

I says, "Mrs. Arbutt," I says, "I stands corrected."

She says, "Don't stand there a-talkin', but jump in."

I didn't make no remarks, but I never did see such a ridiculous small wehicle to 'old two ladies, both full-sized and something over, for she's more than 'arf as stout agin as me.

'Owever I did get seated I do not know, and never was more uncomfortable than I were agin the hedge of that shay.

She says, "Give me the reins," to the boy as was at the donkey's 'ead.

I says, "Are you a-goin' to wenture to drive?"

She says, "In course I am."

I says, "Better trust the boy as is used to that hanimal, for I've 'eard say as donkeys, tho' small, is wicious."

She says, "I'll soon take the wice out of 'im, as 'ave ruled 'is betters," as was certingly true, so far as poor Arbutt's lifetime, as she led a dog's life, I've 'eard say.

I never did see a smaller donkey in my life, no bigger than a full-grow'd sheep. I says to the boy, "Ain't that hanimal full small for the load," as says with a grin, "Law bless you, he'd draw a 'aystack," as made Mrs. Arbutt bust out a-larfin', but I didn't see no joke in it, for I'm sure he was a wicious brute, as 'ad a nasty 'abit of layin' 'is ears flat back, and not a sign of 'air on 'is tail, escept a bunch at the end on it.

Mrs. Arbutt she give 'im a lash with the whip, and up went 'is 'eels agin the front of the shay, and kicked off a bit of iron, as flew up in my face.

I says, "That's a good beginnin', any 'ow; wherever is that young rascal as did ought to be at 'is 'ead?"

She says, "I can manage 'im werry well," and gives 'im another cut with the whip. Off he starts, and run like mad agin one of them wans full of people as was a-comin' from Ramsgate.

I shall never forget the jolt as I got, as nearly sent me out a-flyin', and would 'ave done so, but for bein' wedged in that tight alongside of Mrs. Arbutt.

I never did 'ear in all my life sich langwidge and redicule as we got from that wan-load, as they called us the Siamese twins, and some said as we was a-drivin' out to sea, and then they 'ollers as we was two disgraceful old sacks of fat for one donkey, and one chap says, "Send for the Cruelty to Animals Society," and the boy as belonged to the shay he come up and sauced the other driver, as cut at 'im with 'is whip in drivin' off, and ketched me a stinger across the back, as felt pretty sharp, with nothink on but my pelerine over a musling.

So arter that I says to Mrs. Arbutt, "'Adn't you better let the boy walk at 'is 'ead?"

She says, "Certingly not; I don't want to look like a old fool as is afraid of a donkey," as I know'd she meant at me, but didn't take no notice not till I was out of that shay, safe and sound, as I wished myself over and over agin; for as to drivin', she didn't know no more about it than Miss Biffin, as were born without arms.

I never did see a donkey go on more perwerse, for he kep' a-walkin' from side to side of the road, a 'elpin' 'isself to every bit of green as he see, and showed great instincs every now and then in pickin' out where they was a-growin'.

He didn't go no great pace, escept every now and then, as when he 'eard the boy a-comin', and

then he'd break into a trot as was enough to shake your teeth out of your 'ead.

It was a uncommon 'ot day, so Mrs. Arbutt she said as we'd go towards the sea for a bit of a breeze, and so we did.

I says to 'er, "In my opinion we're a-goin' to 'ave a storm, for the sun is drawin' my back like blisters."

She says, "'Old the umbreller lower, then;" for she'd made me leave my parrysole at 'er place, and bring the umbreller for me to 'old over both on us, as she could keep a parrysole up and drive too.

My harm were a-achin' agin with that umbreller, and jest as we was a-turnin' a corner, a gush of wind come as tore that umbreller from my 'and, and away it went.

I give a scream for the boy to stop it, and off he set a-runnin' arter it.

I says to Mrs. Arbutt, "'Adn't you better pull up and wait for 'im?"

"Oh," she says, "if I was to pull up every time as you makes a fool of yourself, we should be out for a month, as at a shillin' a 'our would run into money."

I didn't make no answer, tho' cut to the quick, as the sayin' is, and so were that donkey, for Mrs. Arbutt 'it 'im such a wicious one jest then as woke 'im up, and off he set at a gallop, a kickin' and plungin' like a ship in a storm.

Well, there was a whole lot of them tramps a-comin' along the road as travels by the family, all rags and sunburnt, with a tin pot, and bundles, and a babby at their back, and lots of children, and if they didn't begin to run with us, leastways the children, as Mrs. Arbutt, a-seein' as they was a-frightenin' the donkey, made believe to cut at with the whip, leastways so she said, but one of them gals give a scream, and if all the lot wasn't arter us in no time, a-swearin', and a-tearin', and peltin' us with everythink as they could lay their 'ands on by the roadside. I'm sure the crack I got in the middle of my shoulders must have been a flint, it made such a bruise, and was painful for days.

I give a shout of 'elp, for if the donkey wasn't a-goin' full pelt towards the sea, and I says to Mrs. Arbutt, "We shall be over the clift in a minnit!"

"Oh," she says, "they don't lay this way."

I says, "They do," and ketched old of the rein myself, and give it a pull, as only seemed to make that donkey go the faster, and should 'ave been carried out to sea, but jest then the wheel of the shay come agin a stone, and off it flew across the road, and over we went shay and all, like a sack of coals, all over the place.

I was that stunned as I didn't know nothink till I found myself a-settin' by the roadside, with

my front fell off in my lap and my bonnet and wail gone, with my shawl and redicule.

I looks about for Mrs. Arbutt, as wasn't wisible to the naked eye, and only see as them tramps 'ad all levanted, and the donkey was a-feedin' just as tho' nothink 'adn't 'appened.

I was a-sayin' to myself as Mrs. Arbutt was a brute to go and leave me like that, when I see somethink a-'eavin' up and down in the ditch close by; and when I come to look agin, it was Mrs. Arbutt's gownd. I 'urries up to 'er, and there she was a-layin' pantin', as only shook 'er fist at me and glared frightful.

I says, "Are you 'urt serious?"

She didn't make no answer for ever so long. At last she says, "Brandy."

I says, "Bless your 'art, it ain't to be got 'ere for love or money."

She says, "In a basket under the seat of the shay."

I goes and looks there, but law, it was gone, and so was the cushins and everythink out of the shay, as them tramps 'ad made free with. When I went back and told 'er, I don't think as no tiger as ever were born could 'ave showed sich temper or used sich langwidge.

I says, "It's all your own doin'. Whatever made you go and 'it that gal with the whip?"

She says, "I never touched 'er. It was you as pulled the donkey round and went over the old man's foot, as esasperated 'em, and now they've been and robbed us of everythink, and kicked me shameful into the bargin."

Jest then the boy come back with the umbreller as was blowed to a skelington of ribbins, and he begun a-'owlin', a-sayin' as 'is father would 'arf kill 'im for leavin' the donkey, as he wouldn't 'ave done but for me.

I looked about everywhere for my bonnet, as I thought them tramps must 'ave took, but found the ruins on it, as they'd been and tore off the ribbins and the flowers, a-'angin' on a 'edge.

I managed for to put it on, and tied it under my chin with my 'ankercher, and jest then a spot of rain fell on my nose as big as a shillin', and I 'eard the thunder growlin' in the wind's eye, as looked werry black in the distance, and I know'd meant mischief. So as I see a wan a-comin' along, I 'ails it and gets in, for I was that disgusted with Mrs. Arbutt's behaviour, as called me all the old faggits she could lay 'er tongue to before that boy, that I'd walked away from 'er down the road.

When I got into that wan, there was several ladies and children as was out for a 'oliday, and I'm sure was as kind to me as if I'd been their mother, and would make me 'ave some refreshments as

they'd got with them as I stood in need on; and one of the ladies says, "That will keep you up, dear, till we gets to Ramsgate."

I says, "But I ain't a-goin' to Ramsgate."

"Yes," they says, "you are; leastways this wan is."

I says, "I must get back to Margate, as said I should be in to dinner certing, thro' espectin' Brown 'ome to a pigeon-pie and peas and bacon at two with a friend."

So they stops the wan, and out I gets, and the man were that civil as he wouldn't take nothink, but said as a wan would come by in a minnit or two as would take me back to Margate.

I waited ever so long a-listenin' to the thunder a-mutterin' out at sea, and drops of rain a-fallin' as the man with the wan said was only a sign of 'eat, as it certingly were, for I was meltin', tho' the sun 'ad gone in.

At last a wan come along, but full to the brim, as the sayin' is, so I walks on and on, 'opin' as another wan would overtake me, for the rain was a-beginnin' to fall in good earnest, so at last I tried for to stand up for shelter under a wall, a-crouchin' agin a door in it, as wasn't no real protection, but better than nothink, for I couldn't see no 'ouse nor nothink near.

I was a-squeezin' as close to that door as ever

I could, for the rain was drivin' with the wind, when all of a sudden the door give way with me, thro' its being opened sudden, and in I went, slap agin a old gentleman in a straw 'at and a umbreller as was standin' inside.

"Hallo!" he says, "what are you a-doin' here?"

I says, "A-standin' up for the rain."

"Rubbish," says he, "why this door wouldn't be no shelter to any one a third of your size." He says, "You're arter my fruit agin."

I says, "Me arter your fruit? I didn't know as you 'ad any, and 'adn't no idea as this were a garding."

He says, "Some of your lot cleared off nearly everythink last week."

I says, "My lot! What do you mean? I'm a respectable married woman from London, as 'ave come 'ere for the benefit of my 'ealth, as is well know'd."

He busts out a-larfin', and says, "You looks delicate." But he says, "Walk off, and don't let me ever ketch you a-lurkin' about my premises no more, or else I'll send you somewhere for the benefit of your 'ealth as'll quite set you up."

I says, "Send any one into Margate, and inquire of Mrs. Parfitt if I ain't respectable."

He says, "Where does she live?"

I says, "In Margate."

"Ah," he says, "but where in Margate?"

Well, I was took aback, for tho' I'd been ten days in the 'ouse, I'd never thought about the address.

So I says, "I don't know the name of the place, but," I says, "it's the last 'ouse but one in the row as you turns up to get to 'Igh Street, as 'ave green shetters, with a garding in front full of London pride and flag-flowers, and the 'ouse whitewashed all over with little lumps."

He says, "It's a likely story, but," he says, "you may go, for tho' I'm a magistrate, I shan't go no further in the matter, but let it be a warnin' to you." And if he didn't take and bang the door right in my face that wiolent as it brought down the rain a reg'lar pour.

I never 'oped to get 'ome no more, and I never shouldn't but for an old sailor as I met, as showed me the right road, as wasn't, he said, more than two mile, and I'm sure I thought we'd been miles and miles in that donkey shay.

When I got in, Mrs. Parfitt didn't know me; it was ever so long afore I 'ad the strength for to change my gownd, and wet to the skin thro' everythink.

Brown come in and brought 'is friend jest as I were ready, but that fool of a gal 'ad been and put

the pigeon-pie in the oven to keep it 'ot, and said nothink about it, thro' 'avin' took it to the baker's two 'ours too soon, and if it wasn't as black as a coal, as made me ready to cry, for I'd made it myself afore goin' out, and 'ad told 'er pertikler not to take it to the oven till twelve, as she did the werry moment my back was turned.

It's lucky as Mr. Bennit, as were Brown's friend, was partial to peas and bacon, and Mrs. Parfitt 'ad a bit of cold lamb in the 'ouse. So we made a meal, but I never did see sich a man as Mr. Bennit to larf, for I thought as choke he must, when I was a-tellin' Brown and 'im about Mrs. Arbutt and the donkey shay, till I got quite put out.

So I says, "You'll escuse me, sir, but," I says, "the 'art as can't feel for another ain't no true friend in need as is a friend indeed, as the sayin' is," and Brown he turned on me, sayin', as next time as I made a fool on myself, I'd better keep it myself, as so put me out that I took to my room till they left the 'ouse, and 'ad a cup of tea with Mrs. Parfitt.

It was two nights arter about nine o'clock, I'd jest 'ad a lettice and a lobster for my supper, as them small ones eats werry sweet, when Mrs. Parfitt give a tap at the door and come in lookin' flurried.

I says, "What's the matter?"

She says, "Mrs. Brown, I wish as you could make some escuse to go up into the room over'ead and look at that young man, as strikes me as werry much wuss than either 'im or 'is ma thinks 'im."

"Well," I says, "I brought in a few flowers this evenin' as I thought he'd like, so I'll jest wash my 'ands as is rather lobstery, and make bold to take 'em up myself," and so I did.

When I got up-stairs the young gentleman was a-bein' read to by 'is ma, as was pleased with the flowers, and said as 'is throat were werry painful.

"Ah," I says, "indeed, and a painful part to 'ave bad as 'ave so much to go thro' and so much as goes thro' it, as is the nearest way to the 'art, as the sayin' is."

He says, "Mother, Mrs. Brown is quite a philosopher."

I says, "You'll escuse me, sir, not a-understandin' you thro' not bein' one as 'ave ever read no learnin' books; but," I says, "there's more to be learnt werry often from your feller-creaturs than books can teach you, for," I says, "I'm sure all as I knows is from 'earin' Brown go on about all manner, as 'ave got 'is 'ead full of steam-engines as won't let 'im rest."

The young gentleman says, "I should think not," but he spoke werry low like.

So I says, "Whatever is the matter with your throat?" as 'is ma says the doctor said was somethink of a quinsey.

"Ah," I says, "painful, but not dangerous; leastways did not prove so to my certing knowledge with old Mrs. Seacole as was large market-gardeners, and 'ad nephews and nieces by the score a-waitin' for 'er money, as is what I calls dead men's shoes, as I'd never look for myself; when she was took with a fit of larfin' thro' a-settin' at 'er winder and seein' a pig as run between a man's legs as 'ad a whole pile of empty 'arf sieves on 'is 'ead and throw 'im down jest for all the world like the Tower of Babel, and broke 'er quinsey as saved 'er life, tho' they 'ad the pig killed that werry week, as I do believe was spite, for the weather was that 'ot as pork was not 'olesome, and give old Seacole a bilious fever as nearly brought 'im to the symmetry, as is what we must all come to tho' it need not be pork in July as finishes us off; and as to Mrs. Seacole she surwived many years, tho' 'er end was not peace at last thro' bein' caused by the roof of the washus a-fallin' in where she was a-settin' for cool a-shellin' some peas, never dreamin' of the dry-rot a-undermindin' that roof, as was what them builders called it, though in my opinion it was more likely the damp-rot, for the steam never did get a proper went out of that washus as 'ad only a winder the

size of a sheet of paper, and obliged to 'ave the door open always as let the steam into the 'ouse and made everythink werry clammy on washin' days, and the poor old lady never looked up no more and died that next winter."

But I says, "P'r'aps I'm a-tirin' the young gentleman a-talkin' so, and am used to sickness myself."

The lady says, as 'er name were Watkinson, "You don't look like a inwalid."

"Ah," I says, "size ain't strength, and do assure you when I was married you could 'ave clasped me round the waist with one 'and, and that flat, as a lady said, I looked like a thread-paper, and I'm sure scores of people did used to say, when my 'Liza was only three months old, as they didn't know which would go fust, and now she's the mother of five."

Well, I were a-talkin' away, and that young gentleman kep' on a-gigglin', and at last 'is ma says to me, "I hope you didn't feel any the worse for gettin' so wet thro' the other day?"

I says, "Not in the way of cold; but," I says, "a false friend is wuss than 'ail or rain, as I'd rather 'ave a open enemy than a secret foe, as the sayin' is," for I'd been dreadful put out thro' 'avin' a bill for that donkey shay sent into me that werry mornin', and threatened with the County Court if

not settled at once, as I says to the lady, "can't be justice nor yet law."

So she asks me all about it, and I was a-tellin' 'ow shameful Mrs. Arbutt 'ad be'aved, to say nothink of the donkey, when that young man as 'ad been all of a titter bust out a-larfin', and coughin', and ketchin' 'is breath till he was black in the face. Up jumps 'is ma, and calls out, "He's a-dyin'."

I rushes to 'im, and see what was the matter, and give 'im a good 'ard pat between the shoulders, and 'urries 'im into the next room, for he'd been and cured 'isself a-larfin' all in a minnit, and, tho' far from well for many days, went away at the end of next week werry near recovered; as I told 'is ma, and so did others, as all he wanted were change of hair.

From the time as they give notice to leave, the way as Mrs. Parfitt went on I never did; she'd let me ring and call for everythink till I was wore out; she'd let the gal make the tea with the water not a-bilin'; she'd forget to send for the fresh butter, and never 'ave enough milk in the 'ouse; she let the cat steal everythink, down to a bit of pickled salmon I'd 'ad saved for Brown's supper, and I 'eard 'er say to the gal as she didn't want 'er kitchen blocked up with live lumber, jest 'cos I was a-makin' a fruit tart for Sunday.

I did not say nothink, a-thinkin' as we should go on to Ramsgate for a week in a day or two p'r'aps.

When the day arter that lady and her son was gone, she bounces into the room and says, "The sooner you can go, Mrs. Brown, the better I shall be pleased."

I says, "It will not break my 'art if I goes this werry moment."

She says, "I wish you would, for I'd rather 'ave your room than your company."

I says, "You're welcome to my room, as is your own, and as to my company, you'll never 'ave that no more as long as I live."

She was a bangin' out of the room, and come wiolent agin Brown, who were a-comin' in, as 'ad been out to get 'is boots cleaned, thro' the gal 'avin' throwed 'em up the stairs agin untouched.

So he says, "What does all this mean is what I wants to know?"

I says, "Ask your friend, Mrs. Parfitt, as knows best."

She says, "Ask that double-faced old full moon of a wife of yourn."

He says, "Hallo! be civil. What's she done to you?"

She says, "'Ticed away my best lodgers to send 'em to 'er own friends at Ramsgate."

I says, "Me 'ave friends at Ramsgate? Whoever said so?"

Says she, "Never mind. I know what I know."

I says, "That's nothink to me. But esplain what you means."

She says, "You think as the gal didn't 'ear you say as this air were too keen for that young gentleman, and as Ramsgate were more sheltered."

I says, "I did say so, certingly, but 'adn't no friends to recommend there."

She says, "You're a reg'lar foxy old serpint as I wouldn't trust nowhere, not even in a empty room; and," she says, a-turnin' to Brown, "I pities you to be tied for life to that old sack of fat with a rope round 'er."

And so she bounces out of the room, and I went and packed up that werry moment, and we was out of the house and in new lodgin's by dinner-time; not as they didn't cook us anythink in them lodgin's as 'ad a 'ouse full of lodgers, and could only get two rooms on the second floor as was tremendous 'igh, and so was the rent, only Brown 'ad promised to stop in Margate and look arter somethink for 'is friend Bennit, as made me grumble not a little, for I wanted to 'ave gone into Ramsgate if it was only to spite Mrs. Parfitt.

The 'ouse as we went to was more like a beargarding, as the sayin' is, than a 'ouse, and as for the

children in the parlours, wild beasts was angels to 'em, as was in and out like a dog in a fair, as the sayin' is, and would bring in sea-weed and sand by the bushel; and what with there bein' nine in family and would keep all their provisions in the two rooms as they lived in, to pass their parlour-door weren't no treat; not as they need 'ave slammed it in my face that wiolent every time as I walked thro' the passage, for I'm sure I ain't one to stare in at nobody, pertikler them as dresses all over the place without a bit of blind drawed down; but it comes 'ome to 'em, for one mornin', as the eldest daughter give it a tremenjous slam when she see me a-comin' up the steps, and ketched 'er grandpa's fingers in it, as were a-gropin' 'is way along the passage, as is werry dark, and there I found 'im a-dancin' on the mat like mad, a-suckin' 'is fingers in hagonies, as I says to 'im in pity, "Get a little bilin' water as 'ot as you can bear, and 'old 'em in it, as will give you ease," as made that hugly hupstart of a gal say as any fool know'd that, and called me a interferin' old wiper for nothink; but that old man will lose both 'is nails as sure as my name's Martha, and might 'ave turned to a lock-jaw, as I've know'd a door bring on afore now; the same as 'appened to Miss Simmons, as shet 'er own father's 'eel in the street-door thro' a-bangin' on it 'ard lined with iron in 'Ackney

Grove, as did used to be a lonesome place, open behind, and split up 'is tender 'Ercules, as the doctor called it, and made 'im limp for ever after up to 'is grave.

I 'adn't been in them lodgin's, as I couldn't abear, not two days when I found as they was a den of robbers; and no wonder the parlours kep' their bread-pan under the bed, for I never see sich locusses as they was, a-standin' me out as Brown and me 'ad eat a shoulder of lamb and French beans at one meal, and as they'd throwed away the bare bone, as I wonder didn't bring a judgment on 'em, and stole my umbreller as I left outside the door of my room thro' not a-wantin' it to drip; and was always a-pretendin' they'd put things away even down to Mr. Bennit's razor as 'ad a bed for one night, and never got 'is night-shirt back, a-pretendin' it were gone to the wash of its own accord without 'ands; and swore as the soup as I'd 'ad from the 'am and beef shop 'ad turned sour in a 'our or two, and smelt it myself a-warmin' for their dinner.

As was a ugly wretch of a woman, with a aged mother, as I'm sure they ill treated, leastways a idle, skulkin' blackguard of a brother did, as I've 'eard swear at 'er myself; and a thing as they called a younger sister, as was dressed out in ringlets, a-settin' out for a walk dressed like a waggerbone,

and as ugly as 'er sister, as 'ad a face like a door-knocker marked with the small-pox, and did used to live up 'Oxton way; but thieves they were always, wherever they lived, I'll swear.

I 'ad no end of a row with Mrs. Arbutt about that donkey shay, as pay for I would not, and sent me a lawyer's letter, leastways pretended it were; but Brown soon settled that, and I might 'ave 'ad the law agin Mrs. Arbutt, as throwed water over me in passin', a-pretendin' to be a-waterin' 'er plants; and the remarks as she kep' on a-makin' behind my back all the way down the jetty in a chair was enough to prowoke a saint, and when she did say as I were a ship in full sail, I turns round on 'er, and says, "Any 'ow I can get along without bein' towed in a Bath-chair."

I was glad for to 'ave been down on 'er for 'er rudeness, not as I meant to stomp on 'er gouty foot as she were a-gettin' out of the chair the next day, by the doctor's orders, as said she were to try and walk a little; and 'owever should I know as she was close behind me when I stopped sudden to speak to Mrs. Israels, as is a old acquaintance of mine in the furniture line, just off Great Prescott Street, and was a-walkin' with 'er family, as is a downright picter to look at, and dressed like queens and princesses, tho' I 'ave 'eard say as Queen Wictoria never did dress the children 'an'some,

but then you see she give everythink to the poor.

I never did 'ear such a yell as that Mrs. Arbutt give, and made every one turn round; and there was a tremenjous crowd on that jetty.

She says to her niece, "Emily, where's the perlice? I'll give that old murderer into custody."

I says, "Who are yer a-callin' a murderer?"

She says, "You! Oh," she says, "I'm killed!" and flop she went down on the jetty thro' bein' too 'eavy for 'er niece to 'old 'er up.

Parties cried shame on me, some said as I'd knocked 'er down, and others as I were a swell mob, as the place were swarmin' with; and I do think I should 'ave 'ad trouble but for Mrs. Israels, as proved 'erself a good Christian a-speakin' up for me, tho' a 'Ebrer Jew as is 'er ways, and bore testament to me not bein' in fault, tho' always a 'eavy treader, as size ain't nothink to do with, for its well know'd as Daniel Lambert could dance like a feather on the table arter dinner, and never break a wine-glass, nor yet upset nothink.

That 'ot bath give me sich a sickner over the sea that I never thought of goin' into it without a shudder; but every one said as it would do me a world of good, and as to Brown, he never let me rest over it, a-sayin' as I were the most wrong-'eaded party as he'd ever seed, as certingly made

me feel 'urt, for if ever there was a woman to listen to adwice it's me—not as I takes in all as people gives me, or a nice mess I should 'ave been in, the same as I was when Mrs. Turnbull adwised me to 'ave my parlour carpet steamed, as were a stout Brussels when sent, and come 'ome a rag with all the colour flowed out of it; and as to sickness, the way as people as don't know nothink about it will give adwice gratius as they calls it, they did ought to be transported the same as that old fool Mrs. Willis, as adwised poor Mrs. Milton to rub 'er boy's eyes, as was inflamed, with opidildoc, as werry nearly blinded the boy, and was no doubt a fine thing for 'er 'usband's lumbago, rubbed in with a bit of new flannin across a-goin' to bed as will draw the pain out, and werry near as bad as one of them dratted medsin'-chests as is a curse in a family like Mrs. Welby's, as was a-wayin' out things from mornin' to night, and made medicated ginger-bread-nuts for the children with a over dose of everythink in 'em, as was proved by their bein' eat by mistake by all the party as went up to 'Amstead 'Eath to tea and donkey-ridin', and never thought as they'd get 'ome alive, as jalap and tartar-emetic ain't things to go out a-pleasurin' on in the general way.

But as I were a-sayin', I'd 'eard so much from Brown about 'avin' a dip in the sea, that I thought

I'd go and do it on the quiet. So off I goes and gets a machine as the party as owned wanted to come too.

I says to 'er, "No, I thank you, I do not wish to be dipped like a infant in arms."

"Law!" she says, "I'd dip you beautiful as would float like a cork."

I says, "I do not wish to do nothink like a cork, thank you; let me 'ave the machine and I can look out for myself."

"Well," she says, "you're jest in good time afore the turn of the tide, and as you don't want me I'll look arter other customers."

I says, "By all means," and was jest a-puttin' my foot on the step of the machine, when up comes a chit of a gal and says, "This machine is engaged by us," and jumps up them steps as nimble as a kitten, and two other gals followed 'er and shet the door, and off they was dragged.

I says, "Nice manners for the sea-side," and walks to the next, and jest as I were a-goin' in, a stout party all dressed in brown 'olland as made 'er look like a downright deformity, she rushes at me like a mad bull broke loose, and puts 'er foot on the step and says, "'Ow dare you attempt to henter my machine as I've engaged for the season?"

I says, "Don't lose your temper over it, or you'll bust."

She says, "Oh, you wulgar old wretch!"

Well, jest then the 'oss as 'ad been put to moved on a bit, and thro' 'er 'avin' 'er foot on the step dragged 'er a little way along and down she went a-cropper on 'er back; up flew all the family as was settin' close by along with the nuss a-screamin' like mad, "Oh, ma! dear ma!" and tryin' to pick 'er up under the arms that wiolent, and werry nigh a-draggin' that brown 'olland thing off 'er.

I says, "Let 'er alone, as can struggle on to 'er feet if you let 'er roll over, but is too 'eavy a weight for you."

"Oh, you wicked wretch!" says the nuss, "fust to knock 'er over 'cos she claimed 'er rights, and then want to leave 'er 'ere in the sand;" she says, "if I 'adn't the hinfant in my harms I'd spile your beauty for you." And if all them children as couldn't move their ma, didn't turn on me, a-pitchin' into me with them parrysoles, and one little chap shinned me frightful.

I 'adn't it in my 'art to strike the poor things with my umbreller, a-seein' as they was only a-standin' up for their parent as were nat'ral, tho' werry disagreeable.

Some people as was a-standin' by took my part, and the stout lady 'erself managed to set up, as 'ad got a false plat tied on to 'er back 'air as come off with 'er 'at.

I says to 'er, "Did I touch you, mum?"

She says, "Touch me! why you kicked my leg from under me."

"Well," I says, "if you'll say that, you'll say anythink but your prayers, and them you whistles."

She says, "Oh! the godless old 'eathen, to talk like that before these innocent babes."

I didn't want to 'ave no more words, so I walks up to a machine as was standin' a little way off and says to a boy, "You jest put the 'oss to and take me out for a bathe."

He says, "You can't 'ave this machine."

I says, "I will."

He says, "You can't."

I says, "Get out of the way and let me get in. I ain't a-goin' to be 'umbugged all day like this;" I says, "there ain't another machine to be 'ad, and if you don't take me I'll tell your master, as I see that fat woman in the 'at give you somethink on the sly to say as that other machine were 'ers, as is a black falsehood."

So he says, "If you will 'ave this one as ain't strong, it ain't my fault."

I know'd it was only 'is lies about its not being strong, so I says, "It will carry me as far as I wants to go."

He says, "You look sharp, then."

I says, "Look sharp yourself, and put the 'oss to."

He says, "Look out for yourself, 'cos of the tide."

I says, "Don't you teach your grandmother," and into the machine I gets.

I do believe as that boy were put out with me, for the way as he drove that 'oss all over the place with me was downright dreadful.

It wasn't no use me a-'ollerin' at 'im thro' the little 'ole in the door, for what with 'im a-singin' and the sea a-roarin', nothink wasn't to be 'eard; but the way as I was knocked from one side of that machine to another, werry nigh knocked my breath out of my body, and 'it my funny-bone till I 'ollered agin, as made my fingers tingle till I couldn't 'ardly undo my dress for to put on my bathin' gownd.

I 'ung up my bonnet and shawl on a peg, and as soon as that beast of a boy stopped the 'oss, I opens the door of the machine, and when I see all the oshun a-rollin' as far as the eye could reach, I felt that scared as I'd 'arf a mind to go back.

I only put my foot on the fust step as leads down to the sea, when away went me 'eels with a run, and there I was plump in the oshun waves; it's a mercy as there were a rope a-'angin' down, as I ketched 'old on, or I should 'ave been swep' out to sea, and might 'ave been a-floatin' to all eternity, as the sayin' is.

It give me a tremenjous shock at fust, but the water soon felt werry pleasant; and as I've 'eard say as you did ought to go in 'ead fust, for fear of

bringin' on fits, I give my 'ead a good dip, souse come the sea all over me, and bunged up my eyes for a minnit or two, and when I could look out of 'em, I see somethink a-floatin' on the sea, and if it wasn't my 'ead of 'air and welwet as I'd forgot to take off afore goin' in.

I was that savage, for it was as good as new was that 'air, tho' I'd bought it of a 'air-dresser second 'and, as 'ad made it for a lady as 'ad never lived to wear it, and tho' a lighter colour than my own, become me wonderful, and parties said took off ten years at the werry least, as no doubt was thro' its bein' nat'ral off some young woman's 'ead, as do often sell it and never miss it, thro' its growin' that quick at 'er time of life as ain't to be espected when nearer sixty than fifty, as the sayin' is.

Jest as I were a-lookin' arter my 'air, a wave come up that sudden, and ketched me sich a wiolent slap as knocked me agin them steps, and afore I could struggle up 'em into the machine agin, another sent me a-flyin', and all my fears was bein' washed away, machine and all, for the sun 'ad gone in, and the clouds was a-comin' up like mountings.

I got into the machine at last, and dressed as quick as lightnin', and 'ollers to the boy for to drag me up, but, bless you, the young monkey was ever so far off.

I opens the door, and waives the towel like a flag, as bein' damp wouldn't fly.

I don't think as ever I were more frightened, for I quite thought as night would come on, and me be left there, and would 'ave got out and waded for my life, only I 'eard say as there was quicksands all about, as won't bear the weight of a child, as 'ave been know'd to swaller up a whole ship's crews in a minnit, the same as the Goodwin's, where Mrs. Freinley's uncle, as were a pilot, floundered in the dead of the night, a-bringin' 'ome a Ingyman as wouldn't answer the 'elm, and I'm sure I'd 'ave let the sulky brute flounder by 'isself, as is terrible tempers, and only to be espected from negro blacks, tho' I've 'eard say as kindness will tame 'em like other savage brutes, not as there's no white brutes in the world, for I'm sure that old Elvey, where we lodges, is more brutal than any black, tho' white 'air and pink eyes from 'is birth, and is called a halbiner.

It was ever so long afore that boy come out to fetch me with the 'oss, as couldn't move that machine, as was stuck fast as a rock in the sea.

I says, "Don't keep on 'ittin' the hanimal, as is past work, and would be dead, no doubt, but for the sea hair, as is a wonderful thing for weakness."

I'm sure the words as that boy used to that 'oss, tho' gibberish to me, was the creatur's nat'ral langwidge as he understood, for he strained frightful a-tryin' to move that machine, but all in wain.

Says the boy to me, "I'll go and fetch another 'oss."

"What!" I says, "and leave me 'ere? Never! If you goes, I'll go too."

He says, "'Ow?"

"Why," I says, "on that 'oss's back as can carry two easy. So bring 'im 'ere."

He says, "He won't carry over 'is weight for nobody."

I says, "Over 'is weight, indeed! Why, I ain't 'arf the weight of a cart-'oss."

He give a whistle, and says, "Look sharp, the tide's a-comin' in."

I says, "You don't mean it?"

He says, "I do."

I says, "Whatever did you leave me 'ere so long for to perish?"

He says, "It wasn't me as brought you; and the other boy said as you wanted to be left, and would 'ave this machine as didn't ought to 'ave come at all thro' the wheel bein' broke."

I says, "'Owever am I to get on that 'oss's back?"

He says, "I'll back 'im agin the machine door;" and so he did.

'Owever I did scramble onto the 'oss I don't know. I 'eld on for life by that boy, tho' the 'arness were hagony to sit on.

The way as that 'oss turned round and round in the water afore he'd start showed a hobstinate temper and a 'ard mouth. Not as I would 'ave minded that so much, if he'd not showed 'is temper by a-layin' down jest as we was within a yard or two of the shore.

I felt 'im a-goin', and ketched 'old of 'is tail as I'd slid over; but he plunged about that wiolent that I couldn't 'old on, and should no doubt 'ave been drownded, but for a fisherman in long boots as come and drawed me on to dry land more dead than alive.

That fisherman was as good as a father to me, and 'urried me into the bathin' house, and fetched me 'ot brandy-and-water, whilst the women wrung me out, a-sayin' as sea-water never give cold, as I found were false, to my cost, as the sayin' is, for I kep' my bed two days, and never will believe as sea-bathin' is 'olesome for rheumatics, and is frightful dangerous besides, for I'm sure there was parties as got drownded whilst I was there out of number, all thro' bathin' in the sea.

When I was better, Brown told me as he'd 'ad to pay seven shillin's for that bathin' machine as they'd said I would 'ave, and could manage for myself without none of their 'elp, as only shows 'ow your words may be took up agin you; but should like to 'ave the law agin that boy as I'm

sure did it out of spite—a young rascal—and all them boys at the sea-side is the cheekiest lot as ever I see, and no doubt is encouraged in their impidence by them as did ought to know better instead of encouragin' 'em to scramble for 'apence, as makes 'em that graspin' as I 'ates to see in a boy; not as I 'eld with the parties in our first floor a-chuckin' red-'ot 'apennies out of the winder, as is a cruel joke, pertikler on them poor hignorant hytalian boys as comes round with monkeys on a orgin as like as two peas, as the sayin' is, and must be some relation, I should say, barrin' the tails, and 'owled fearful with 'is fingers burnt, as relishes a nut tho' werry greedy in takin' 'em away from the other, and got served out thro' some rough characters a-throwin' stones and breakin' every winder in their apartments thro' not a-likin' to see them poor boys put on like that, as in course a 'apenny 'ot or cold is a object to.

One of them monkeys of boys brought 'ome my front, as he said they'd ketched out of the sea while a-srimpin', and Brown give 'im a shillin' for 'isself; but law bless you, as I says to 'im, it's a-throwin' good money arter bad, as the sayin' is, for it was that stiffened and sticky with the sea water, and full of sand, and wouldn't never dry proper, tho' I 'ad it washed in loowarm water and tied to the bed-post with the winder open for

days, but is as good as a weather-glass, for it always gives when wet's a-comin' on, as I can tell myself thro' my feet a-shootin' like bows and harrows, as is a sure sign, but no ile won't never make that front look itself agin.

I was a-gettin' on that nicely, and able for to go out in one of them Bath-chairs, as is the only sort of bath you'll ever ketch me in agin, for my knee was that painful, as I felt in walkin' up 'ill, so Brown got a werry steady man to wheel me out for a 'our or two every day, as would 'ave been more agreeable if he 'adn't been werry much give to rum and onions, as he breathed in wolumes warm into the back of my neck in talkin'.

He was a werry pleasant man, and took every care on me.

He'd seen a deal of life, as remembered George the Fourth a-goin' over to 'Anover from Ramsgate, as is right oppersite, and Queen Wictoria a-livin' there when quite a gal along with 'er ma, as did used not to be strong, as many ain't a-growin', but 'ave lived to be the mother of a fine family, tho' not tall; and as to that Prince of Wales, I calls 'im werry nice lookin', tho' stout, and none the wuss for that, for there ain't no cemetery without flesh, as is well known.

Well, this man as belonged to the chair, it was wonderful to 'ear 'im talk, as remembered Bony-

party a givin' 'isself up for lost aboard a man-of-war, as would 'ave been shot but for the Duke of Wellin'ton, as wouldn't stand by and see it done, as I consider were noble, because Bonyparty 'ad the mean sperrit for to reward a waggerbone as 'ad tried for to shoot the Duke, as is all fair in war, but not in cold blood.

Well, I was a-sayin' to that man 'ow I should like to see the rocks as did used to be nothink but smugglers' caves, as this old man would talk about for ever, and said as he'd never tasted a cup of tea nor a drop of brandy worth drinkin' since them smugglers 'ad been put down, as would land cargoes by night, even in the church or anywheres, and frighten people away as thought they was evil sperrits.

So I says one day as I should like for to see them caves as is still showed, but he says, "Wait till you're stronger, as is cold as the tomb."

He says, "I tell you what I'll do, I'll run you over the cliffs, and show you where them smugglers did used to land."

I says, "I don't mind a-seein' where they landed, but for mercy sake don't run me over the cliffs, as is 'ighly dangerous, and parties been know'd to fall thro' bein' overtook in liquor, or readin' along the hedge."

He says, "I'd run you all over the world, and not 'urt a 'air of your 'ead."

I says, "Not if it's cliffs, for it's agin natur."

It was a werry fine day next day, and he took me up on to the fort, as is werry agreeable situated, tho' esposed in winter, I should say.

I was a-lookin' out to sea, as was that bright and fresh as you longed to be on it, when a party come up with a telerscope, and asked if I'd like to look thro' it?

I says, "What at?"

"Oh," he says, "them wessels in the hoffing."

I says, "I can see werry well with the naked eye all as I wants to see;" for I don't 'old with them telerscopes, as I know'd a party as lived oppersite to Mrs. Padwick's as 'ad one always at the winder as was that powerful as it could see thro' anythink and was always a-lookin' at the stars, as was a downright nuisance to the oppersite neighbours a-goin' to bed. One on 'em indeed did threaten for to knock 'im over and the telerscope too, if he made that free with it into their second floor.

While I was a-talkin' to the party with the telerscope, up comes old Eadley as belonged to the chair, and 'ad been to get 'isself 'arf a pint as he stood in need on after that up-'ill work, and begun a-wranglin' with the telerscope.

I says, "Don't stop 'ere a-arglin' and barglin', but let me see them places where the smugglers did used to land," so on he pushed the chair.

'Im with the telerscope kep' on a-follerin' a-sniggerin' and a-larfin'. At last we got to a place cut out of the clifts as leads down to the sea with a dreadful steep slope.

Old Eadley stops the chair and began a-tellin' me all about 'ow them smugglers did used to roll the casks of liquor up this place as was made for the purpose, when the telerscope-man come up and says, "Go it, Eadley, but don't pitch it too strong or the old lady'll get frightened."

I says, "Who are you a-callin' old? get out you impident waggerbone, or I'll frighten you."

He says, "You've only got to ask me to push your chair, and that would frighten any one, as requires a steam-ingin' to draw it."

He put 'is 'and on the chair, and made believe with all 'is might to try and move it.

Old Eadley says, "Take your 'and off the chair," and give 'im a knock on the arm.

He turned round and give old Eadley a blow, and between 'em with their struggles they started off that chair, as began a-goin' by itself all down the 'ill full pelt, as the sayin' is.

I screamed out, but there wasn't no one near but them two old fools as was a-strugglin' together.

There was parties on the clifts over'ead as give a shout, but in course couldn't be expected to jump down and stop the chair, as I couldn't get out on thro' the apron bein' buttoned over me tight.

There I was with the rollin' billers as they calls 'em right afore me a-givin' myself up for lost.

I shet my eyes, and felt as it were all over with me, and so it was, for as luck would 'ave it the wheel of that chair went over a somethink as upset it, and away I went over, chair and all, as is the only thing as saved me from a watery grave.

I was a good deal shook, but more frightened than 'urt, as the sayin' is, and glad I was for to be able to walk up to where one of them carriages was, and 'ome I got more dead than alive, but luckily no bones broke.

Some'ow that fright as I 'ad with that chair seemed to do me good, for I began to walk agin, as I says, "No more of your chairs for me, Mr. Eadley," as comes that evenin' with tears in 'is eyes, but in my opinion a little on, a-beggin' and a-prayin' as I'd look over it.

I says, "I don't bear no malice; but," I says, "as to ever puttin' my foot in a chair agin, I'd as soon think of puttin' it into a rat-'ole."

I must say as I did think that old Eadley a 'onest-'arted old tar, and wouldn't 'ave believed 'im the mask of deceit as he proved 'isself over some

tea and brandy as he got me from the smugglers as he told me 'ad only made believe to be put down, but was a-lurkin' about all over the place afraid of their lives, and always 'ad a little of the right sort as they'd sell cheap to a friend, as in course they was drove to thro' not a-darin' to sell it open.

I certainly do relish a cup of good tea, and likes to 'ave a little fine old brandy in the 'ouse to be took as a medicine, as 'ave saved many a life in the plum season.

So I agreed as I'd 'ave a pound of tea and a bottle of brandy, as was to come to ten shillin's the two without duty; "but," says old Eadley, as brought it late at night, "you mustn't ever open 'em in Margate, as would be detected by the smell alone, specially in this 'ouse where you're a-lodgin', as they're in the Excise and would smell a rat in a instant."

I says, "It may be a rat as I smells all over this 'ouse, as is a filthy 'ole, and I'm a-goin' to leave the day arter to-morrer as other lodgers 'as done a'ready, as the dust-'ole alone is putrid fever, and that ain't nothink to the drains."

Says old Eadley, "Wherever you are in Margate don't use the tea or brandy, as is a 'eavy fine to all concerned in it and may be prison."

I says, "Law! take it back, then."

He says, "Not so green," and 'obbles off with my 'arf sov'rin.

I never touched that tea nor brandy, but packed it away at the bottom of my box till I got 'ome, and then found as the bottle 'ad broke and soaked thro' and thro' everythink, but I'm sure wasn't no loss if it was like the tea as I used on Brown's birthday, when we'd a few friends, and put in double what old Eadley told me, as said a pinch on it would go as far as 'arf a ounce of what I got at the shops.

I made it myself with the kittle full bilin', and it was such rubbish as I wouldn't 'ave give to a enemy, let alone old friends as tried to make the best on it; but bad was the best, as 'ad all to be throwed away and fresh made.

I always drinks it mixed myself, at five shillin's, leastways that's what it comes to with two ounces of gunpowder to a pound of four shillin' black, tho' I must say as a old friend of mine, as is a good judge of tea and always gives me a capital cup, she drinks Horniman's uncoloured, as I think I shall take to myself.

The evenin' afore I left them lodgin's, Brown bein' over at Canterbury, I went to drink tea along with Mrs. Israels, as is a friendly soul and glad to see me.

Them children of 'ers is downright prodigals.

They dances and sings lovely, and goes on for all the world like play actors, in werry short frocks run thro' with blue ribbins, and blue morroker shoes and pink silk stockin's; their 'air's lovely, all loose down their backs, as I says I should say would spile it thro' the hends a-splittin', and as to young Master Israels, as I put my foot in it by askin' of 'is Christian name, as wasn't never christened of course, tho' baptized in the name of Samuel.

He were a lovely boy, tho' too much ile on 'is 'air to please me, as curled nat'ral, and dressed in blue welwet with gold buttons and lovely open-work collar, and to 'ear 'im under seven go on Shakspeare by the 'our together it was wonderful, tho' 'Ebrer to me as is what they're so proud on.

I don't know as ever I 'ad a more agreeable evenin' and delicious things for tea, as is wonderful cooks, and sweet wines and things with cakes afore I come away, and a little drop of what they calls snaps as 'ave a fine flavour, and Mrs. Israels says they 'ad brought 'em from 'Olland, as is where 'er people comes from to correct them sweets.

It was a lovely night and not far to go, so I walks 'ome and got to the door as the clock were a-strikin' ten.

I turns the 'andle as was my constant 'abit up to eleven, and found as the door was locked and bolted.

So I give a gentle tap, but loud enough to be 'eard all over the 'ouse, but no one didn't come to the door.

I knocks agin and agin but all was silence like the grave, as the sayin' is.

I knocked and knocked till at last a winder were opened next door, and a party as was evident been to bed says, "Confound your tappin', go away."

I says, "Go away, indeed; when I wants to get in and go to bed."

"Why," he says, "they're all gone away."

I says, "Whatever do you mean?"

"Why," he says, "she's give up possession to the landlord as 'ave locked up the 'ouse; but I can't stop 'ere a-chatterin' with you all night, as'll give me my death of cold," and down he shets the winder.

I thought as I should 'ave dropped; it were jest eleven o'clock and where to go for a bed I didn't know no more than the child unborn, and must 'ave slep' on the door-step only a widder lady as lodged next door come 'ome at that werry moment, and like a warm-'arted Irish 'ooman as she were, give me a bed for the night. I don't think as ever I were that sitivated like in my life afore without anythink of my own to sleep in, not so much as a 'air-brush, and tho' they do say as

you did not ought to look a gift 'oss in the face, yet I couldn't 'elp a-wishin' as that bed as the good lady give me 'adn't been a flock, as I couldn't get no rest on, and every bone in my body was a-achin' when I got up with my face swelled up all one side thro' the winder not a-shettin' close agin the bed-'ead.

I was glad as there weren't anythink alive in that bed except myself, as might 'ave been expected from the look of it.

I never did meet a kinder soul than that Mrs. Murphy, as would 'ave me stop to breakfast, and don't think as ever I tasted better 'am and eggs with a new cottage loaf and prongs as is a relish.

I was all of a fidget not a-knowin' 'ow to act, and espectin' Brown back as I know'd would be awful put out, so kep' on the look out for 'im, and sure enough see 'im come a-ridin' up in a one-'oss carriage about eleven o'clock and goes out to meet 'im.

He says, "That's right, old gal! you're all ready, jump in. Where's the boxes? we ain't got a minnit to spare to ketch the train."

I says, "Law! Brown, 'ow you do run on to be sure, you takes away my breath."

He says, "Oh! bother your breath, we shall miss the train."

I says, "Do 'ear any one speak," and tells 'im what 'ad 'appened.

Ravin' bulls is a trifle to the way as he went on, a-sayin' as he'd wrote me a letter as I did ought to 'ave 'ad by the last post overnight, a-tellin' me we must be off 'ome by the train in the middle of the day as 'is Aunt 'Opkins were not espected to get over it, and not a soul near 'er but the doctor and 'er servant as'll lay 'er 'ands on everythink the moment the breath's out of 'er body, the same as that Martha Terry did when old Richardson went off the 'ooks, as the sayin' is, and took everythink out of the 'ouse down to the 'at pegs in the 'all afore she let the relatives know as he was dead and buried, as she managed thro' the lawyer as was 'is executioner, and in my opinion did not come to 'is end by fair means, tho' that lawyer did make me apolergize public for sayin' so; yet I will say that to give any one as is bad with a wiolent diorama biled beef and bottled stout over night, is no better than murder all the world over.

Brown, he went round for to find the landlord of that 'ouse, but of all the ruffians as ever I did see that landlord was the wust, as said he wouldn't give up a rag till 'is rent were paid, and used langwidge enough to blister 'is tongue.

While we was a-talkin', Brown got a telergram from 'is aunt's doctor, a-sayin' as she'd took a turn

and might recover, as them old ladies werry often does as is as tough as pavin' stones, the same as Mrs. Oldfield, as were kep' alive thro' the brown creturs along of me a-droppin' brandy down 'er throat every 'arf 'our, with 'er jaw dropped and 'er eyes fixed, and nicely abused I got by 'er nephew, as were a-waitin' for 'er money, but never got it a-graspin' wretch, as am thankful to say she left it all to the widder of 'is brother, as was only forty pounds a year and 'er bits of furniture, but come in werry 'andy to that poor soul as were left with three and weak eyes as stopped 'er from workin' at 'er business, as were lace mendin'.

I never was so miserable in my life as I felt that mornin', without no clothes, and Brown not a shirt to 'is back to change, and we 'ad to pay two weeks' rent afore we could get our things tho' not owin' a farthin', for I'd paid that two-faced 'ussy the day afore tho' not due, as come a-carneyin' me and sayin' it would be a conwenience if I wouldn't mind a-payin' two days afore'and, and little did I think as she were sich a wiper a-layin' in wait for me; but we got the boxes, and then Brown says to me, "It's only four miles inland to Sam Bennit's, as 'ave made me promise to come and see 'im and bring you, only 'earin' about aunt bein' that bad throwed me out."

I says, "Is Mr. Bennit a family, Brown?"

He says, "A widderrer with grow'd-up daughters, and a nice place as ever you see, with the 'ay all down and the sea in the distance."

I says, "Let's go to a inn and make ourselves respectable, and arter a bit of dinner then we'll see about goin'." And so we did, and left my big box as I'd 'ad patched-up behind, and only took a carpet bag for the night.

It were a pretty drive to Mr. Bennit's as is a farm-'ouse all whitewash and wild-roses, and certingly he did seem glad to see us, and 'ad a bed all ready, tho' the ceilin' were that low as I werry nigh knocked my 'ead off and smashed my bonnet agin a beam the fust thing.

It was werry agreeable a-drinkin' tea on the lawn, and smellin' the 'ay as were that sweet as was like the country. Mr. Bennit was werry perlite and so was the youngest daughter tho' crooked; but the eldest was a reg'lar screamin' tartar, as the sayin' is, for temper, with a yaller complexion and long ringlets—not as she showed any hairs to me at first but quite the contrairy, but the way as she showed the clover foot to 'er pa about the 'ay and spoke to the servants showed 'er true colours; not as she could 'elp bein' lame as they told me were a fall brought it on, but a fall don't make one leg a full foot shorter than the other, as I should say was the 'ip bein' drawed up into the body, as tho' out of

sight never can be out of mind, and the reason, no doubt, as 'er father 'ad brought 'em up near the sea-side, as is bracin' hair, within two miles, but won't never cure a contracted limb nor yet set the back-bone straight, tho' a wonderful thing for the liver, as is often the seat of the mischief, especial with young children, as I'm sure I never espected to see Mrs. Elliot's fust anythink but a object, as never walked till close on five, and is now in the blues, where they won't take 'em without a doctor's certificate to prove as they're over six feet without a blemish, as they don't consider a 'air lip nor yet a cast in the eye, as he 'ad both, brought on in teethin' so 'is mother said, but born so is my opinion.

We set a-takin' our tea, as they took at four as is full early but werry pleasant, and 'ad some fruit, not as I took any thro' a-considerin' as it spiles the tea.

When it was over Mr. Bennit says, "Wouldn't you like for to walk round the farm, Mrs. Brown?"

I says, "In course; but not this evenin', as 'ave only thin shoes on as don't suit where there's so much damp about."

"Oh," he says, "it's as dry as a bone everywhere."

So in course I couldn't say a word, and off we goes all over the place, leastways all but that eldest daughter as said she'd somethink better to do.

I'm sure what with 'is Alderney pigs and barn-door cows, and cocks, and 'enns, and pigeons, let alone a donkey and two goats, that man's place were like a live Noah's ark, only nothink didn't seem pairs.

I was tired to death a-goin' about it, and 'ad to be pulled out once or twice a-sinkin' down in that farm-yard as is werry moist under the straw.

At last Mr. Bennit, he says, "Now we'll go to the 'ay-field, as the sun is off by this time," and so we did.

They was just a-givin' over for the day, and it did look werry nice and smelt delicious, but I was that tired I thought as drop I must, and says to Matilda Bennit as I should like to set down.

"Oh," she says, "let's sit on the 'aycocks;" she says, "we'll 'ave one made up for us;" so she calls to a boy as come with one of them forks and tells 'im to pick up some more 'ay and put it together, and so he did, and another boy 'elped 'im, and come a-runnin' with lumps of 'ay on 'is fork, as they throwed in a 'eap, and glad I was for to flop myself down on it, but didn't believe as I could 'ave jumped up agin as sharp as I did, for if that boy didn't take and run the 'ay fork into me inches deep.

I give a yell as made 'em all run to me. I says, "It don't signify, for it ain't nowhere as is mortal, and I ain't one as is inflammable; but," I says, "it

might 'ave been my death, and whatever made 'im do it?"

The boy says as he was only a-puttin' the 'ay together for to make it softer, not a-knowin' as I were a-goin' to set down so sudden.

I wasn't much 'urt escept in my feelin's, a-seein' as they was all on the grin, and as to Brown, he roared, as encouraged Mr. Bennit for to forget 'is manners.

So I says to 'im, "A pitchfork is a pitchfork, and no joke as I can see, but no one knows where the shoe pinches but them as wears it." I says, "It's my own fault, in course, as did ought to remember as chairs is the best seats for me."

Brown says, "The idea of a woman at your time of life a-throwin' yourself on a 'aycock like that."

I says, "What 'ave time of life got to do with it, Mr. Brown, as a pitchfork will make any one feel if they was the hage of Jerusalem."

Mr. Bennit he'd sent for a chair for me, and I did set a little while, but soon felt as the midges was too much for the back of my neck. So we went in, and arter supper I was glad to get to bed.

I says to Brown, "'Ow long are we a-goin' to stop?"

"Oh," he says, "Bennit's a capital chap, he wants us to stay as long as we likes, and is a-goin' to

drive me over in the mornin' to see some stock he's a-goin' to buy."

"Well," I says, "don't let's out-stay our welcome, for I'm sure that eldest daughter don't want us."

"Oh," he says, "you're always full of your fancies."

Well, arter we'd 'ad breakfast, off them two went, and left me with them sisters as quarrelled from breakfast to dinner over some young man, as was downright foolishness, for they was both close on forty, let alone bein' deformed and hugly.

I got so sick of 'earin' 'em jangle, that I went to my room and washed out a few fine things in my 'and-bason, a-thinkin' as I'd lay 'em on the grass to bleach, as was only a few collars and sleeves.

I'd set myself down in the parlour, when I'd put 'em out, a-waitin' for dinner, when I 'eard that limpin' brimstone say, "Whose been a-puttin' them rags over the lawn?" and 'eard some one's voice say as I didn't know,

"Why, old Fatty to be sure."

"Then," says the other, "I'll teach 'er to get up 'er washin' 'ere, as is like 'er impidence."

I didn't take no notice thro' not a-likin' to 'ave seemed to listen, as is a mean haction, so I set still.

Werry soon the youngest come in and said, "Oh, Mrs. Brown, dinner's ready, and I 'ope you

can eat beans and bacon, for the butcher 'as never brought the meat as were ordered;" as I know'd were a false'ood, for I'd 'eard 'er sister say from my bed-room as she shouldn't send for no shoulder of lamb for to please 'er father, and that them as asks theirselves must take what they can get.

I never said a word, but eat a bit of the bacon as were beastly, and beans is a thing as a little on goes a great way with me.

Of all the 'ard drippin'-crusts as there was to that black currant pie I never did; it was like flint, and set the 'uman tooth at defiance, leastways the only one as I've got left couldn't do nothink with it.

To 'ear the remarks of that eldest daughter, a-sayin' as if she'd know'd of the 'onour of my wisit she'd 'ave 'ad everythink in apple-pie order.

I says, "I don't know about apple-pies, but don't consider as you're good 'ands at pastry."

"Oh," she says, "insult our 'umble ways."

I says, "I don't mean no insults, as I don't want to 'ave no words with you; I shall go to my bed-room, and wait for my 'usban' to come back, and not be in the way of your quarrels."

She says, "I suppose you want to finish your washin', as is a nice thing to do in a strange 'ouse, as I suppose you've brought that bag full."

I didn't make no answer, but walked out of the room, and went up-stairs, and when I'd been there

a good bit, I remembered my bit of bleachin', and looks out of my winder, and if that grass-plot where I'd laid my things wasn't full of cows a-grubbin' and a-feedin' all over the place.

I 'urries down, and got 'old of a clothes-prop, and run to drive them cows away, when I 'eard that wixen of a woman 'oller out, "If you dare drive my father's cows I'll set the dogs at you."

I says, "And I'll give you, and the dogs too, this clothes-prop;" and sets to work a-pickin' up my things, as was that trod under foot by them cows and messed about as I didn't think as they'd ever come round.

I went back to my room, and got all ready to go the moment as Brown should come back, and watched for the shay-cart a-comin' along the lane; and as soon as ever I see it, I goes down and got the servant to bring down the bag as I'd give a shillin' to, tho' I think as it was 'er woice as I'd 'eard call me "Old Fatty," but in course only did it to curry favour with that wile-tempered 'ussy.

I got to the gate jest as Mr. Bennit drawed up, and says, "You must take me into Margate, Brown; it's life and death."

I see as both 'im and Bennit 'ad 'ad their wacks, as the sayin' is.

So he says, "It can't be done."

I says, "It must."

Bennit says, "Law, Mrs. Brown! we've come 'ome for a jolly evenin', and got roast fowls for supper."

I says, "I wish you may enjoy 'em, but go I must and will."

So Brown says, "Then you may go alone."

I says, "I will not. I'll go this moment, and you shall come too." I don't know as ever I spoke so positive to 'im before.

Bennit said as 'is 'oss were too tired, and tried all as ever he could to persuade me to stop, and calls out 'is daughter, and says, "You spitfire, this is your doin', I know. What did I tell you afore I went out about not showin' your temper?"

She says, a-scowlin' at 'im, "Yes, you told me to be civil to this woman, because you wanted to get money out of 'er 'usban'."

I never see a man fly into sich a rage. He turned deadly white, and would 'ave struck 'er but for Brown, and clenched 'is teeth and fists.

"Oh," she says, "let 'im strike me as he used to my dead mother, and 'ave me before now. He's robb'd us of everythink to sot it away with others as wile as 'isself, and you are some of the gang, I suppose."

I was dreadful shocked. I says, "Miss Bennit, I'm sorry as ever I come, but know'd nothink

of your father." I says, "Brown, come away. I'll walk, if we drops on the road."

He didn't say a word, but picked up the carpet-bag, and I lays 'old of 'is harm, and off we walked together. Tho' I was dreadful aggrawated, I don't think I should 'ave 'ad the pluck to 'ave started if I'd know'd what a journey I 'ad afore me. I will say as Brown behaved noble, never a murmurin' agin the carpet-bag, and sayin' as I'd done right all the way along, till we see the lights of Margate, as was a godsend, for I'd 'ardly a leg to stand on when we got into the town, just on ten o'clock.

It was lucky as we'd left our things behind at that inn, or we should not 'ave got a bed all night, and I was that sick and tired of bein' knocked about so, as I said I'd go 'ome, for I didn't feel no better for the sea-side; but Brown he said as we'd 'ave a week, and enjoy ourselves, for he was in 'igh sperrits at not 'avin' been let in by that old Bennit as he'd found out all about, and was werry nigh a-lendin' 'im three 'undred pounds on 'is farm, as were pawned over 'ead and ears a'ready, as the lawyer told 'im, and would 'ave lent 'im the money on only but for me a-insistin' on leavin' the 'ouse, as shows that when you says a thing you did ought to stick to it, and not be a-waccinatin' about it, as my dear mother always did set 'er face agin, not believin' as it could be a right thing to do, tho' in

my opinion innoculation is only a-meetin' trouble 'arf-way, as is a thing I never would do myself, tho' p'r'aps better than 'avin' it nat'ral, as is a dreadful disfigurement, and didn't ought to allow nobody for to see theirselves in a lookin'-glass arter sudden, as 'ave been know'd to die thro' the shock; not as I can a-bear to 'ear of sich rubbish as any one 'avin' the skin torn off their face as is quite useless, for in course they are sure to be werry much pitted any'ow.

I must say as I did enjoy that last week at Margate werry much, and the things as I got in raffles at the bazaar was not to be credited, and only puttin' in a shillin' at a time, and got a pair of candlesticks and a inkstand with a blottin'-case, and two pair of lovely screens, and were werry near gettin' a lovely dressin'-case fit for a duchess, only when I got it 'ome they come and said as it were a-drawed by another Mrs. Brown, as I shouldn't 'ave minded so much if the young man as come about it 'adn't said as Brown were sich a common name.

I says, "I beg your pardin that it ain't, for there's titled parties as is proud to own it; and if every one 'ad their rights, my 'usban' might 'old 'is 'ead up with the best, only thro' 'is father never tellin' on 'im where he was christened, tho' he do believe it were old Marrybone Church; and there's

a tombstone in that churchyard as Brown can all but swear to was 'is grandfather's, as were a builder down Paddington way, and 'ad 'ouses by the score out near Tottenham, as would be a fortune now, only morgiged without no title-deeds, as is the ruin of many."

So that shet that young man up, not as I'd 'ave give up the dressin'-case if the other Mrs. Brown 'adn't come and showed me 'er ticket, as were ninety-six, and said as mine were sixty-nine; so in course I wouldn't keep back what were 'ern lawful.

Brown he called me a old hass, as is 'is wulgar ways, and said as I'd been took in; not as I ever went near that libery agin, for all the lovely music as there was of a night, for it's my opinion as there's a great mixture in the company, and am pretty sure as my pocket were picked there, tho' I only set down by two parties as was dressed beautiful, but looked bold, tho' p'r'aps I dropped it, and 'ad a lesson not to bring no charges thro' what 'appened that time as I went to the 'All of the Sea, as is like fairyland all over, and beautiful music a-playin', and suppers as is delicious, with oysters caught fresh out of the sea close at your werry feet.

I was a-walkin' about there, and 'ad been in with Brown to 'ave a somethink at the refreshment bar, and as we was a-comin' back there was a deal of

scrougin' and pushin', and all of a sudden I misses my brooch as I'd won at the libery two days afore, as I were a-goin' to 'ave Brown's 'air put into. I says, "I've dropped my brooch," as the pin on were nat'rally weak.

Brown says, "No great loss."

I says, "I begs your pardin, I walues it." So I looks about and speaks to one or two of the parties as belongs to the 'All, but nobody 'adn't seen it.

I set down quite wexed, and Brown he'd fell in with a friend as he were a-goin' to 'ave a glass with, and says to me, "Set 'ere, Martha, I won't be many minnits." I says, "Certingly," and there I set.

Well, a minnit or two arter there come along a young woman a-gigglin' and a-larfin' with a young feller, and if she 'adn't got my brooch stuck in 'er dress.

I give 'er a gentle tap with my parrysole, and says, "I'll trouble you for that brooch, as is mine, and you've picked up."

She only bust out a-larfin', and says, "She's screwed."

I got up in a reg'lar rage, and says, "You impident 'ussy, 'ow dare you say so? as it's my opinion as you stole my brooch," and I 'ollers out to the perliceman as was at the door, and says, "I've been robbed."

He come up and says, "What's the row?"

So I told 'im, and he turns to the young woman, as says as cool as a lettice, "She's welcome to the brooch, as is Brummagem rubbish."

I says, "It's solid gold, as I won in a raffle."

The perliceman he larfed and says, "You'd better square it."

Says the young woman, "There's nothink to square. I won this brooch in a raffle."

I says, "'Ow can you tell sich a falsehood, for I can swear it's mine."

"Oh," she says, "give me in charge for stealin' it."

I says, "I will if you give me any more of your impidence."

She says, "You'd better, as will rue it the longest day you lives."

I do believe as I should 'ave 'ad 'er locked up, but luckily Brown come up and settled the matter at once, a-sayin' as he'd got my brooch as I'd left on the counter where we'd took the refreshments, as I well remembered a-layin' it down thro' bein' that 'ot as I were obligated to undo my shawl, and 'ad come away and left it unawares.

Well, I says to the young lady as I were werry sorry, but she says, "I don't care no more for your sorrer than your hanger, as must be a reg'lar old idjot to want such a thing, as I only stuck in my

dress for a lark, and ain't worth threepence," and off she walks a-larfin', and I did look foolish to everybody a-standin' round, and Brown were that savage as he made me go 'ome at once, and called me sich names as made my 'art nearly break a-cryin' myself to sleep; and what made me most savage was in the mornin' 'im a-provin' as I'd been and spent over three pounds at that bazaar, and 'adn't got anythink worth five shillin's, but law it was my own fault, for 'owever can they afford to keep up that place with music and all manner, and then give away plate and jewels worth thousands for a shillin' or 'arf-a-crown a chance ?

So I didn't go in for no more raffles, and was really sorry as I'd been and taxed that young woman with my brooch, not as she need 'ave turned on me with that abuse as she did on the jetty, when I was a-walkin' all alone two days arter, and 'eard 'er a-makin' werry personal remarks about my figger behind my back, and didn't know as it were the same party till she said quite loud, "She's a mask of rubbish all together, or she would never 'ave wore that twopenny 'apenny brooch in earnest."

I turned round and give 'er a look, and if she didn't put out 'er tongue at me.

So I says, "Pray don't forget the lady, as is lettin' of yourself down."

She says, "I should like to let you down over

the end of the jetty for to ketch crabs with, as they always baits for with hoffal."

I couldn't stand that, and says, "I thought you was a decent-behaved gal when I 'polegized for takin' you for a thief, but now it's my opinion as there wasn't no apology due."

She give one drive at me with both 'ands as I slipped a one side, and she come butt agin a old gentleman as she sent a-flyin' on to a lady's lap as were in one of them Bath-chairs, as was drove wiolent back among the crowd, and you never see anythink like the row as there were.

Over went the chair, a-flyin' out went the lady, and sent the little dog as she were a-nussin' clean over the side of the pier, as fell down among the passengers as was a-landin' from the steam-boats, and bit one or two as raised the cry of mad-dog, and every one took to their 'eels.

I was swep' along ever so far, and then knocked breathless agin the side of the pier; and while a-standin' there a-tryin' to get my breath agin, up come that young woman, with a lot of others and a constable, for to give me in charge.

At fust I says to the constable, "If you're a-goin' to take me up, you may carry me."

"Well," says the perlicemen as was come up, "we'll soon 'ave the stretcher out for you."

"What," I says, "and strap me down, a respect-

able party, like a lost, drunken lunatic as I see you carryin' along the other day?"

He says, "Certingly I will, so you'd better come quiet."

I says, "I'll go, if it's the laws of nature, as in course I must obey, as old Mr. Tomlinson said to the doctor as give 'im up with the jaunders at ninety-two;" and so sayin' I walks on.

Says the perliceman, "If he's a respectable man and a 'ousekeeper, and will bail you, it's all right."

I says, "Who are you a-talkin' about?"

He says, "Mr. Tomlinson. Is he a 'ousekeeper?"

I says, "He's been dead over five and twenty years, and so must 'is 'ousekeeper be, for she were a old lady when I was a gal."

He says to me, "Then he ain't no good. Where do you live?"

I says, "Close agin 'Awley Square; and if my 'usban' was 'ere, he'd make you repent a-takin' me up thro' the streets like a gang of pickpockets."

It was werry disagreeable walkin' with every one a-jeerin' and a-starin' till we got to the perlice-station, and the inspector begun for to ask questions, and says, "Who makes the charge?"

No one answered, and there wasn't no one to

answer, for that young woman didn't show up, as I'd 'ave give in charge 'erself, for it was all 'er doin' as gave the old gent that shove, tho' meant for me.

So in course the inspector said as he'd discharge me; but he says, "Don't you be brought 'ere no more, or it'll go 'ard agin you, as we've got a eye on all the lot of you as 'ave come down by the boat two days ago."

I says, "I've been 'ere this four weeks, and shall stop another ten days, for the place is only jest a-beginnin' to tell on my constitution."

"Well, then," he says, "mind 'ow you behaves yourself. Clear the hoffice," and out I was shoved, and got 'ome safe at last.

We was a-lodgin' along with a Mrs. Barlow, a werry nice woman as 'ad know'd better days, but was come down in the world thro' a sick 'usban' as 'ad kep' 'is bed fourteen year all thro' wearin' a tight boot, as in my opinion is all rubbish, but shows scrofula a-peepin' out, and a awful thing too, for I'm sure there was Miss Hanger as was not able to be turned in 'er bed and stone blind thro' it, as run in the family with black patches behind their years, as they do say was the reason as George the Fourth took to them black silk 'ankerchiefs as was thought a great disfigurement, and as to Mrs. Barlow, poor thing, she'd a frightful face thro' a-

fallin' agin the bars of the grate a-faintin', as burnt all the black an inch deep into 'er skin just across 'er nose as don't look well.

She was a poor, patient, wore-out thing as would cry every hinstant till she made me that dull that I says to 'er, "Escuse me, Mrs. Barlow, but," I says, "you gives way too much as is bad for you, for it's well known as care killed the cat as 'ave nine lives, and whatever can you 'ope for as 'ave only one?"

I'm sure such a life as she 'ad, nearly wore out of 'er body thro' a-tryin' to turn 'im in bed as two ticket-porters couldn't lift, and of all the men to snore I never did, in the back parlour jest under my room as couldn't get a wink for 'im.

Jest at that time as I 'ad the row on the jetty Brown he'd gone over to Canterbury agin so I was left alone, and thro' bein' dull got a book for to read as were werry hinterestin' tho' a old one, for it 'ad belonged to Mrs. Barlow's mother, as did used to keep a circulation libery at Deal.

I don't know as I should 'ave begun it if I'd know'd as she 'adn't got the second wolume at all, thro' a party as 'ad it to read a-takin' it away with 'er, and as to third wolume, she might as well 'ave took it too, for there was about forty pages tore out, and jest the part where you couldn't make out which of the two he married, as were a deceitful rascal a-

courtin' two gals at once as was sisters, and one never told the other, and jest where he'd made up 'is mind to pison one on 'em the book were that lost and tore as I couldn't never make out nothink more than they wasn't a 'appy couple, as 'owever should they be a-livin' in that desolate castle and 'er a-weepin' constant, and would have throwed 'erself over the battle-bridge, as is a place I well remembers with King George the Fourth's staty in 'is royal robes, the same as they've got 'im now at Madame Tusso's, as 'ave been turned into a railway, the werry one as they took me wrong by that time as I'd been a-shoppin' on Ludgate 'Ill, and were a-goin' to drink tea along with Mrs. Padwick's married daughter as lives close agin San Pancrust's Church, and says, "Come early by the under-ground, as will put you out at Gower Street."

I asks 'em at that Ludgate station, when I'd took a little refreshments, tho' I must say as a bit of butter would 'ave improved the sandwich, which train I were to go by.

The gentleman as I see there was that perlite as not only told me where to go, but showed me the office where I took a ticket for Gower Street, and went up one staircase as were wrong, and 'ad to come down, go up another thro' the train a-goin' from oppersite, and 'ad only jest time to ketch it as were a-startin'.

I gets into it all of a 'urry, and the way as I were whisked along is enough to take away any one's breath, and sometimes daylight and sometimes dark, a-stoppin' and a-'ollerin' their gibberish as no one can't understand.

At last I says to a gent a-settin' oppersite in black whiskers, as were a-readin',

"Escuse me, sir, but aire we anywhere's near Gower Street?"

"Bless the woman," he says; "why, we're jest on Barnet."

I says, "Mercy on me, and Mary Ann takes 'er tea at five, and now its 'arf-past."

In course I got out as soon as ever the train stopped, and was then only cheeked for not 'avin' changed at Farringdon.

I says, "I'll report you, my man, as sure as eggs is eggs;" but had to wait 'arf-a-'our for a return train, as only took me to King's Cross, where I spoke to the inspector, as said I'd better speak to the superintendent, as I went to 'is office, and a werry nice spoken young gentleman were that perlite, as I said I only wished to mention it as a warnin,' thro' not a-likin' to be 'ard on that railway, as in course may make a mistake like the rest on us, but was certainly werry aggrawatin', for I took a cab as cost me a shillin', tho' under a mile, thro' sixpenny fares bein' done away, and when I got to Mary Ann's she'd

give me up and gone out a-shoppin' with 'er mother-in-law.

But as I were a-sayin' about that book, some'ow I got that interested in it as I couldn't lay it down, but felt that tired as I thought I'd finish it not in bed, as is a bad 'abit, but jest a-layin' on the outside, as would feel more rested with my things off.

So I lays there with the candle quite safe, and all the curtings pinned back, and 'ad jest finished the fust wolume, and found as I'd got the third nearly 'arf tore out, so I gets up and puts my shawl on, and goes and asks Mrs. Barlow for it, as I could 'ear movin' about in the room under me.

She told me about its bein' lost, as were wexin' ; so back I goes, and lays down on the bed a-puzzlin' over that third wolume, as I couldn't make no sense out on, and jest where the willin were destroyed, thought as I smelt brimstone and fire-like.

I give a sniff and sets up, when a bust of smoke come from the bed, and if I 'adn't been a-layin' on the box of lucifers, as was all of a blaze in a instant.

I give a wiolent scream, as brought Mrs. Barlow up, tho' I'd managed to distinguish myself afore she come, leastways the bed, as I'd 'ad the presence of mind to roll on it, and then set up sudden, as put out the back of my night jacket, as were more scorched than burnt.

There wasn't no great 'arm done beyond

a-makin' old Barlow jump out of bed and throw up the winder, as he 'adn't done for years, a-'ollerin' thieves, but nobody didn't 'ear 'im thro' the back of the 'ouse lookin' on to a chapel. I must say as Mrs. Barlow forgot the lady next mornin' a-callin' me a fancified old fool a-readin' novels in bed, as is the fust time in my life as I was ever know'd by any one to think of doin' such a thing, and will be the last, tho' nothink 'adn't suffered, but a large 'ole the size of a cheese plate as were burnt in the quilt as were only patchwork, as Mrs. Barlow said 'er grandmother 'ad made for 'er, as I think always looks beggarly myself, leastways when not made of bits of silk, and this was only chintz and cotton thro' the old lady's 'usban' being a calender.

Brown, he come back next mornin', and in course sided with Mrs. Barlow, a-sayin' I did ought to be locked up.

I says, "It was all thro' you a-sayin' as you might be 'ome, as made me not want to go to sleep too soon, a-knowin' well as Mrs. Barlow would never 'ear you thro' 'er 'usband's snores, as must sleep like a church, as the sayin' is, as is like the roarin' sea, and I'm sure must lay on 'is back with 'is mouth open or never could do it."

Me and Brown took a walk out that mornin', for I wanted to go to the market and look out for a bit of dinner for the next day as were Sunday,

and a werry fine duck I got as is enough for two, with a fruit tart and wegetables; and arter we'd done our marketin' we walks down to the jetty, and who should we meet but Mr. and Mrs. Ardin, as did used to live oppersite us in South Lambeth, but 'ave moved up to Islington thro' a-findin' South Lambeth damp, as in course any place would be with a 'ouse built on the ground and no drains.

Well, there they was, and their two boys as were 'ome for the holidays, and little Matilda as 'ad growed out of knowledge, as the sayin' is.

So Mrs. Ardin says, "Law, Mrs. Brown, this is a bit of luck, as I 'adn't no idea as you was down 'ere, and only come myself last week thro' Matilda 'avin' outgrowed 'er strength, and persuaded Ardin to come down over night, as we might 'ave a sail to-day, and now you'll come too, won't you, like a dear?"

I says, "You'll escuse me, Mrs. Ardin, but not if it's a boat as you're a-goin' in," for I says, "dry land is quite good enough for me."

"Oh," says Mr. Ardin, "it's as smooth as glass, and you wouldn't never know as you were on it."

"Ah," I says, "for them as is good sailors it's all werry well, but a treacherous elephant to trust oneself on."

So Brown says, "Come, Martha, dont spile sport, and you needn't be afraid."

Says Ardin, "If you don't like it, we'll turn

back, and 'ave got a lot of lunch and bottled beer in a 'amper, and are only a-waitin' for some friends as is espected every hinstant, and you two will just make up the party, as 'ave wittles enough for a couple of dozen, for my old gal's a fust-rate caterer."

I didn't like to say "No," a-makin' oneself that disagreeable, and when they see me a-'esitatin', they all begun with "Oh! do, Mrs. Brown," till at last I give way, but says, "I shall want a extra shawl."

"Oh!" says Mrs. Ardin, "we've got lots to spare, as is in the boat a'ready."

Says Mr. Ardin, "Yes, let's get aboard, the others 'll be 'ere in a minnit."

So down we goes aboard the wessel, as it give me a bit of a turn a-gettin' into, for Brown and Ardin got in fust, and took 'old of my two 'ands, and pulled at me.

I says, "I can't come down that way."

"Well, then," says Mr. Ardin, "jump and I'll ketch you," and 'eld out 'is arms.

I give a jump, and come agin 'im with that wiolence as sent 'im a-flyin' down back'ards, as 'urt 'is back agin the side of the boat, and 'is 'at a-flyin' over the side, and werry nigh 'is wig too, as is beautiful curly, and a lovely brown.

I'm sure the clumsy old fools as Brown called

me was enough to prowoke a lamb, and I'd more than 'arf a mind to go ashore agin, but for Mr. Ardin bein' that good-natured over it, as said he'd got 'is cap in 'is pocket, and 'is 'at were a old one, so I says, "I'll stay, Mr. Ardin, if it's only for your sake," as said as he wished he'd see me twenty year ago, afore he throwed 'isself away, as was only 'is joke, for I've been married over thirty-five year, but it put Mrs. Ardin out, I could see, as said quite sharp, "A-don't make a hass of yourself afore the children," and she's got the whip, and thro' 'avin' of property from 'er father, as they do say were no better than a receiver of stolen goods, as "marine stores" is only a cloak for, all the world over.

We was a-waitin' and a-waitin' for them other parties to come, and that boat a-dancin' about, as were called the "Fire-fly," as were wrote on 'is stern, as Ardin called it, till I began to feel sick of all this wobblin', when young Charley Ardin 'ollers out, "'Ere they come!"

I looks up, and if I didn't see that Mrs. Liverstich, as did used to live next door to us, with 'er two higeous gals and 'er sister, as never a day didn't used to pass without our 'avin' a row, as begun with 'er a-bein' put out at me complainin' of 'er dust-'ole, as were enough to breed a fever, and blue-bottle flies as big as donkeys all over the place, and wrote to the parish; and if she didn't take and

throw her lobster-shells over into our garding, and when I throwed 'em back, abused me frightful, and shied the fryin'-pan, 'ot grease and all, at our cat, as missed 'im, and scalded one of 'er own gals, and then broke all my washus-winders on the sly, as was caught in the werry act, with the clothes-prop in 'er 'and, as Mrs. Challin caught 'old on the other end arter dark and give a drive with it, as caught 'er in the chest, and obliged to send for the doctor, with constant wars a-goin' on, till they all bolted in the night, as I could 'ave give information, but didn't like to act unneighbourly.

When she got into the boat, she give a glary look at me, and begun a-whisperin' to 'er daughters, as 'ad got two young fellers arter them, as was their bows, no doubt.

I didn't even move to 'em, thro' never 'avin' been friendly, and would 'ave got out, only didn't wish to 'ave no unpleasantness, so we was soon off, and werry agreeable the hair felt, tho' I couldn't abear the boat a-dippin' down a one side, as were all along of a sail as they would keep up.

I'm sure I wasn't one to keep up no unpleasantness between parties, so I says to Mrs. Liverstich, "It's a many years since we met, mum, as must be over seven."

She says, "I am not awares as we ever met afore, mum."

I says, "When you lived out by Stepney Green."

She says, "Never."

I says, "Well, then, you're wonderful like, and so is your daughters, to a lady as did, in the same name."

"Ah," she says, "my 'usband's relations, no doubt."

'Owever she could 'ave the face to deny 'erself like that, with 'er broad red face a-starin' at me, with a wart one side of 'er nose as I could 'ave swore to 'er by, dead or alive.

I didn't say another word, but talked to Mrs. Ardin, as were a-tellin' me all about Matilda bein' ill, and Charley 'avin' the mumps as went thro' the 'ouse.

Not as they're what I calls a 'ealthy family, as constant colds in the end cannot be wholesome, and her boy Ned, with a 'ead big enough for six, and werry spindle legs, as 'ave quite outgrowed 'is things.

We'd been out for more than a 'our with a pleasant breeze as I enjoyed, tho' Matilda Ardin were werry squeamish.

I 'eard Brown and Ardin a-talkin' about runnin' for Deal, when the boatman said, as the wind were a-shiftin', and the wessel didn't seem to go on, and the sail were a-floppin' all over the boat as they

pulled down a top on us all, and there we seemed for to stop.

I says, "Why don't we go on?"

They says, "There ain't no wind."

"Well," I says, "what's the use of stoppin' for it then?"

All them Liverstiches bust out a-larfin', and one of them young men says, "P'r'aps, mum, you'd be so good as to whistle for one."

I only give 'im a look, and begun to wish as they'd 'ave lunch, for I was a-gettin' downright peckish.

"We'll lunch off the Goodwins," says Mr. Ardin.

I says, "You don't mean the Goodwin Sands, I 'opes, as is certing death to any one as goes near 'em?"

"Don't talk rubbish, Martha," says Brown, and them two Liverstich gals bust out a-larfin' with them two fellers.

"Well," I says, "it don't make no difference 'ow I comes to my end, as 'ave no young family to think of, and if we are to go together, Brown, we may as well go by water as any other way; but," I says, "I don't want jeers to be my last moments from them as ain't my equals."

Says Mrs. Liverstich, flying out, "What do you

mean by such impidence? Why, you're no better than an old charewoman."

I says, "I may be all that, but," I says, "I ain't never bolted away from my 'ouse in debt to every one all round about, and left even the cats'-meat woman unsettled, as I paid 'er myself ninepence out of charity as were in that distress, thro' berryin' 'er 'usban' and babby the same week.

She says, "If you dare insiniwate such things agin me, I'll ——"

I says, "I don't insiniwate; I openly says as you're no better than a swindler, and come down with me to Stepney way, and I'll prove my words."

She says, "You're in liquor as usual."

I says, "You're a wile slanderer, with your couple of trollops of daughters to back you up."

Well, Brown and Ardin 'ad been standin' up at the end of the boat a-smokin', and didn't 'ear none of our row, but one of the Liverstich gals begun to scream, a-sayin' as I should upset the boat, jest because I got up thro' Matilda Ardin a-tellin' me as the corner of my shawl were in the water, so Brown give me a crack on the shoulder, and says, "Sit down, will yer?" as made all them Liverstiches bust out a-larfin'.

They didn't keep it up long, for jest then there come up a squall of wind, and the sky lookin' that threatenin' as made us all jump.

I says, "Why not put into that land there?"

The sailor says, "The tide's a-comin' in, as'll soon cover 'em."

I says, "Cover what?"

He says, "The Goodwins."

I says, "If them's the Goodwins then we're lost, but," I says, "why not turn back?"

Says Brown, "Don't bother, the wind's dead agin us."

Jest then the wind it begun to blow, and the rain begun to pelt, and as to old Ardin, after all 'is braggism about the sea, and blowin' 'is baccy, and when 'is wife warned 'im not to bein' downright insultin' to 'er, and a-larfin' at 'er and the gal for feelin' queer, if he didn't take and be awful ill.

Mrs. Liverstich she begun to scream for brandy, and both 'er daughters turned dead faint, and them two young gents was awful bad over the side, though one on 'em 'ad said as he was more 'appy afloat than ashore.

The only parties as were not ill, was me, Brown and the sailors.

I was a-dyin' for somethink to eat and drink, tho' rather nauseous; but law bless you, the water rushed all over the side of that boat, and reg'lar swamped that 'amper, and then the water and the

wind seemed beatin' all round, and that little boat wasn't no protection agin the oshun waves as come up all round us.

At last I turned that hawful bad, as I says, "Brown, a little drop of brandy would soothe me, and I'd like to give a drop to that woman as I should like to die at peace with."

I couldn't say no more, for I thought as I were a-goin' fast; and the wind were a-'owlin' and the waves a-rushin', and me a-longin' for death to give me ease.

I wanted for to shake 'ands with Mrs. Liverstich, but couldn't see 'er nowheres, and thought as p'r'aps she'd dropped overboard, and says to myself, "'Er miseries is over, as is a blessin'."

I never did know 'ow 'ard it could rain and thunder till I 'eard it that time, and there was them two sailors just like two postes with dustmen's 'ats tied under their chins, and coats as looked like ile-cloth.

Brown 'ad got one on as they'd lent 'im.

Poor Mr. Ardin was like a log at the bottom of the boat, with cap and wig both washed off.

As to me it was all as I could do to keep 'angin' on to a rope; and as to them Ardins lendin' me a shawl, why they 'adn't got enough for theirselves.

'Ow long we was a-beatin' about I don't know,

for I were that dead faint as life were a burden, and so we kep' on ever so long.

I says, "Brown, 'owever can you stop 'ere, and be drownded without a effort?"

He says, "We've been a-tryin' to make Ramsgate this three 'ours, as there ain't a chance on till the wind drops or changes."

I says, "Go back to Margate then."

He says, "We can't get round the foreland."

I says, "Then we're lost; but," I says, "give me a drop of somethink, for I'm a-sinkin'."

He says, "All the bottles in the 'amper is smashed, and the sailors 'as 'ad all the beer."

So I give myself up for lost, and set a-clingin' on for life, and all the rest dead beat.

I'd give up all 'opes when it 'ad got quite dark, and we came a-bump agin somethink as proved to be Ramsgate.

I got up in that boat, leastways I tried, but my limbs was froze, and two sailors 'ad to lift me out; not as I were anythink to Mrs. Liverstich and 'er daughters, as was one more dead than the other; and them young men sneaked off and left 'em as soon as ever we got ashore.

I thought as it were all over with Mrs. Ardin, for she kep' a-'eavin' long arter we was got ashore to a werry nice little 'ouse as Brown know'd on; the two boys picked up wonderful, and so did the

gal, but their ma were obligated to go to bed; but the rest on us 'ad tea in clothes as we borrowed, with eggs and bacon and chops, and by the time as Brown and Ardin 'ad got their pipes and grogs we was all right.

Ardin says, "I wonder how them Liverstiches 'ave got on?"

Says Matilda, "Oh, them two Almers will take care of 'em as is a-stoppin' at Ramsgate, and only come over to Margate for the day."

I says, "I don't believe as a couple of young sham tailors like them will look arter any one but theirselves."

Says Mr. Ardin, who were a-settin' with 'is 'ead tied up in a 'ankercher thro' 'avin' 'ad 'is 'ead of 'air swep' away by a wave, "I think as you're right, Mrs. Brown, not as I fancies the lot as my wife picked up at the libery; but," he says, "my cap is dry by this time, and as it's a fine night, we'll walk down to the boat, Brown, and see if they knows what's become on 'em."

So they did, as Brown were agreeable, and were out over a 'our, and found them three lone women a-settin' on the pier a-waitin' for them fellers, as 'ad went off a-promisin' to be back, as I spotted for a couple of sneaks the moment as I set eyes on 'em, as was both dressed out reg'lar slop-shop finery; and I ketched sight of their socks, as was

beastly dirty and full of 'oles at the 'eels; and talked as big as bull beef, as the sayin' is, about 'untin' and shootin', and kep' on about balls and pic-nics, as I should say 'adn't no more than what they know'd what to do with; and as to them Liverstich gals as was drawed out in four-and-six-penny muslings and cheap 'ats, they was disgraceful underneath, for I 'elped undo one on 'em when fust took faint.

I says, "Whatever 'ave you done with 'em, Brown?"

"Done with 'em," says he, "why, 'ad 'ard work to persuade 'em not to wait on the pier, and wouldn't 'ave no lodgin's, but 'ave gone back to Margate in the train."

"What," I says, "in all them wet clothes? They'll ketch their deaths."

"Well," he says, "that's their look out."

Poor Mrs. Ardin was werry shaky in the mornin' and a-breakin' 'er 'art over all 'er things being spilte, and as to that 'amper it had been destroyed down to the spoons and forks as luckily wasn't nothink but Britannier mettle; but what Ardin grieved over were 'is pint pot with a glass bottom, but the sea don't spare nothink, as is a devourin' monster, as the sayin' is.

We went back to Margate the next day afore church, jest in time to get somethink from the

cook-shop to make up, as the Ardins were a-comin' to dine, as put Mrs. Barlow out shockin', as certingly five do make a difference to dinner with only one duck prowided, but it was all Brown's doin's as would 'ave 'em; and then we all went and 'ad tea with the Ardins thro' Mrs. Barlow's bad temper.

You should 'ave see the looks as I got from them Liverstiches, and so did the Ardins when we met 'em a-walkin' together, for I see a good deal of the Ardins that week as I agreed to stop, and Brown went up to town with Mr. Ardin on the Tuesday and come back the Friday agin.

A week don't seem nothink when you've pleasant company, and certingly Mrs. Ardin is fustrate for goin' about tho' a 'asty temper.

I says to 'er wherever we goes, I pays my share, so there can't be no 'art-burnins' over a shillin' or two, and as to spongin' on any one, I couldn't do it was it ever so.

We went over to Minster, as is where the monks did used to be, as is now nothink better than tea-gardings, as shows what we may all come to afore we dies.

Then we went to the Reculverers as were built by two sisters as was both drownded in one another's arms, swallered up by the sand thro' the tide a-comin' up unawares, and them two steeples is

meant for them a-lookin' at one another in their dyin' moments, as is werry nat'ral.

Not but what there's some sisters as would be werry glad to see the others drownded, for I'm sure Mrs. Ardin was a-tellin' me 'ow 'er own sister behaved over their father's money as 'ad married a second time; and if that sister of 'ern didn't carny over 'er stepmother to get 'er to make the old gent alter 'is will, and would 'ave done it too propped up in bed with pillers, and 'er 'usban' a-guidin' the pen, only as luck would 'ave it, the candle were dropt out of the candlestick on to the bed and put out, and by the time as they got another light the old gentleman were insensible, so they 'ad to send off for the doctor, as never 'ad 'is senses no more till he were a 'appy release tho' much respected and deeply regretted as 'is tombstone says, as is always the case with them as dies worth money.

I'm sure it's no wonder any one bein' swallered up by that sand as is that treacherous as you can't trust to, for I was as near lost myself one day near Margate thro' bein' on it.

I'd made up my mind one fine mornin' to 'ave a walk along the sands, so starts off with my campstool, in case as I should like a rest.

Well, I walks on and on enjoyin' the fresh hair, but not the clamberin' over them places, as was wet and slippy, but at last got to a werry dry spot,

and puts down my camp-stool for to rest, as I'd 'ard work to drop on to without upsettin'.

That camp-stool, as I 'adn't never used afore, was a werry low seat for me, and I felt as it were a-sinkin' into the sand with my weight, but werry gentle like.

Well, whether it were the glare of the sea or the 'eat I don't know, but I felt that drowsy as I couldn't keep my eyes open, so thinks as I'd get forty winks, as the sayin' is.

I 'adn't closed my eyes not two minnits, I'm sure, when I felt a crack on my bonnet and another on my back, as woke me up.

I looks round, and if there wasn't the sea come in close to me. I struggles to get up out of that camp-stool, as 'ad sunk down that deep in the sand as I couldn't get on to my feet.

Jest then I got another thump, and 'eard some one 'ollerin'.

I reg'lar turned over on to the sand, and managed to get on to my feet, and looks about me, and up on the clift if there wasn't some fellers as 'ad been peltin' me.

I says, "If I gets at you, I'll pay you out."

They 'ollers, "Look out for the tide as is comin' in."

I looks round, and if I wasn't quite on a island with water all round.

I screams out for 'elp, and them parties says, "Make for them rocks;" and so I did, as was jest behind me, and that slimy and green as I couldn't keep my footin'.

They kep' on a-'ollerin' at me, but I couldn't make out what they said. I says, "I shall be lost," for I see as the water did used to come up much 'igher than my 'ead, by the marks on the clifts, and it's a mercy as there weren't no wind, or the water 'd 'ave come up much sooner, and that wiolent as would 'ave drownded me in no time.

It were comin' on quite quiet, and me a-'ollerin' all the time, and afraid to look up, for things kep' a-fallin' over on to me.

There I stood ever so long, till I thought as I should 'ave died of fright, when a boat come round the corner with two men, jest as the water were up to my feet.

I says to the men, "Why ever did you leave me 'ere to perish like this?"

One of 'em says, "There wasn't water enough to float the boat round afore."

I'm sure the bruises I got a-gettin' into that boat was frightful, but glad I was to get safe to land, and cost me five shillin's for the boat, and lost my camp-stool, as cost money, and felt quite ill for days thro' the shock, so you'll never ketch me on them sands agin, as no wonder they calls 'em

reculverers, for nobody as sunk wouldn't ever get out of 'em agin alive.

We should 'ave 'ad a werry pleasant day at them reculverers, but for Mrs. Barlow a-losin' her temper with 'er boy Ned, as certingly was werry impident, but then it's 'er own fault, as I told 'er, for she gives way to 'im in everythink; but law bless you, I'd better 'ave 'eld my tongue, for she told me to mind my own business, and boxed Matilda's ears for sayin' as Ned were spilte, and then 'ad the 'isterics in the middle of dinner, 'cos Ned wouldn't kiss 'er and make it up; and then Sam, as is the other boy, he turned dead sulky over a donkey-ride, and poor Matilda got sich a sick 'eadache as I 'ad to 'old 'er up all the way 'ome in the carriage, and got no thanks, for Mrs. Ardin, if she didn't say as they would never 'ave quarrelled but for strangers a-interferin', and told me not to put my oar in, when I said as they did ought to put Matilda's feet in 'ot water afore goin' to bed.

I see the poor gal were downright ill, and so she turned out, for Mrs. Ardin 'ad to send to me that werry night, and ask my pardin, for the fever were that 'igh as she didn't know what it might turn to.

If ever I was in a 'ouse with two young limbs, it was them young Ardins, as their bluchers was never out of the passage, a-stompin' like mad, and

a-worretin' their mother for money, as let 'em 'ave anythink for a quiet life, and got a-smokin' in the 'eat, and come 'ome like a couple of dead boys, as I smelt 'em out in a instant, tho' she thought it were the gastrick fever, the same as the gal 'ad a touch on.

"But," she says to me, "whatever you do don't tell Ardin as they've been smokin', as tho' a good father would 'arf kill 'em, as is agin 'is orders, and brings 'em up werry strick to their chapel."

I says, "He don't go werry often 'isself."

"Oh," she says, "he do in winter of a evenin'; but makes the boys stick to it reg'lar summer and winter."

I says, "Indeed, then you look out as they don't cut it when they're a year or two older."

She says, "It would be their father's death."

"Well," I says, "he manages to live thro' not a-goin' werry often 'isself, so I don't think as that would kill 'im;" for I 'adn't no patience with sich rubbish a-forcin' the boys to go and a-keepin' out on it 'isself 'cos it was too 'ot and crowded at the sea-side, and was a-idlin' and a-smokin' all the mornin', as in course young people is sharp enough to see thro' with 'arf a eye.

When Ardin come back on the Friday he was werry much put out about the gal bein' unwell, a-layin' it all to 'is wife for the gal is 'is pet, and

took and give both the boys a larrapin' the next mornin' thro' findin' a pipe in their bed-room, as was only 'is temper and didn't do no good. We'd agreed as we'd all go a pic-nic that Saturday thro' bein' my last day, and it was werry near my last day, let alone goin' 'ome on Monday.

We'd engaged a wan so as to 'ave lots of room for everybody and everythink, as I'd asked Mrs. Barlow for to go along with us, as were a charity, for she never did get a chance of a bit of fresh hair, so she 'unbugged old Barlow some'ow and got a party as she'd know'd for years to come and look arter 'im, and was free thro' 'er other lodgers a-goin' the day afore and a fresh lot a-comin' in on Monday, as were a-goin' to 'ave our 'partments as well.

That gal Matilda were not fit to go, and so I told both father and mother, as I 'eard 'em call me a old croaker for my pains behind my back, and let the gal 'ave 'er own way tho' better at 'ome.

Mrs. Ardin's married sister in the name of Royston, as 'er 'usban' had been a sojer, they was a-goin' too, and a werry nice wan we 'ad, and jest on twelve we started as were a-goin' to a place inland, 'avin' 'ad quite enough of the sea.

We'd got nicely along the road ever so far, when I says to Mrs. Ardin, "Wherever 'ave they put the basket with the things in?" a-meanin' the heat-ables.

"Oh," she says, "don't fidget, that's a dear, they're up in front."

I says, "All right," and on we goes, a-stoppin' to bait the 'osses once, as it were some miles we was a-goin' to dine, at a pretty spot on the road to Canterbury as we was to wisit fust and come back to dinner.

I must say I relished a glass of ale on the road, and we got on to Canterbury in nice time, and a noble church we see as were built by the Romans, and shows the spot where one on 'em was murdered savage a Christmas Eve, as was pretty behaviour in a church, but come 'ome to that king as ordered it, for he were lashed to bits at the werry spot and serve 'im right too, a willin.

The church is werry large, and must be a great essertion for any one to preach in it, and I'm sure it can't be no use their preachin' for nobody can't hear nothink but the orgin, and the winders is lovely all painted, and I'm sure it's a pity as the Romans didn't build more churches while they was about it, and so I says to Mr. Ardin as is always down on the Church, as said that there did used to be lots jest as fine as was pulled down and sold for rubbish, as was wicked waste, for now they're a-'ollerin' out for more churches, and I'm sure there's been lots built in my time, as can jest remember when a new church were looked on as downright wonderful.

By the time as we'd looked over that church as 'adn't got none of them lovely things as they shows in the big church with the funny name in Paris, as I wouldn't believe it were called "Notter Dam" till the French told me so theirselves, as looked werry solemn, and parties was a-sayin' their prayers in, as they don't believe in at Canterbury, for there wasn't nobody there but only the party as showed us over, as talked that fast as I could not for the life of me make out what he was a-sayin', and another old man as were a-settin' on a bench near the door a-noddin'.

By the time as we'd see it all the wan were ready, and we was drove back three miles to where we was goin' to 'ave our wittles; and when we got there, if they 'adn't left the prowisions behind.

I says to Mrs. Ardin, "I told you so."

She says, "Never."

I says, "I did, when I asked where they'd put the basket, and you told me not to fidget."

She says, "You might 'ave looked for yourself."

I says, "So I did, and couldn't see it, and that's why I asked you."

"Whatever was the use of askin' when you see it wasn't there?" says Mr. Ardin, as were ruffled thro' 'unger.

"Oh," says Brown, "that's my wife all over, as any one would think were a born idjot."

"Never mind," says Ardin, "they'll give us somethink at the public where the 'osses is a-baitin', " as were only jest round the corner.

So off 'im and Brown went a-foragin', as they called it, and if that Mrs. Ardin didn't turn on me and say as I never meant to bring the things, and said as I begrudged the cold lamb and pigeon pie as I'd prowided.

Mrs. Barlow, she'd got sich a bad sick 'eadache, as she said were the hair, not bein' used to it; but I think was that ale as she'd 'ad three glasses on with nothink but a empty stomick. Mrs. Royston kep' a-sayin' as she wished she'd never come, and Royston only kep' on a-makin' unearthly noises as they said were 'is as'ma, but in my opinion thro' 'is 'avin' no roof to 'is mouth as 'ad been shot away in the wars over there, 'is wife said, tho' I don't see 'ow it could 'ave been shot off and 'ave left 'is 'ead on.

When Brown and Ardin come back they could get nothink but bread and cheese with some cowcumbers and onions and a can of ale, as we was to eat under some trees.

The row as Mrs. Ardin made over it I never did, a-sayin' as she 'adn't the stomach of a cow to eat such stuff.

I says, "Oh, rubbish, better eat that than starve, as Queen Charlotte said when they told 'er as thousands was a-dyin' of want."

Mrs. Ardin says, "It may suit you, but don't suit me and my sister, as 'ave both been brought up genteel."

I thought of the marine store shop in Gravel Lane, and couldn't keep my countenance 'ardly, for I know'd as their own aunt 'ad a apple-stall at the corner of that same street, and none the worse for that in my opinion, tho' no doubt 'ave caused the death of thousands with her win'falls.

I didn't say nothink, but made the best on it, tho' I can't say as I cares much about bread and cheese as a meal, as will digest everythink but itself, as the sayin' is; and certingly brought Tommy Travers thro' that illness as he got thro' eatin' over two pound of cherries, and a-swallerin' the stones in 'is 'urry, for fear of bein' found out, as 'ad took 'em on the sly with 'is mother's back turned as were a-goin' to make a pie, and 'ad only stepped out for 'arf-a-quartern of flour, a-leavin' the cherries on the table; and when she come back found the cherries all gone, and the boy black in the face on the flat of 'is back a-kickin' for life, as they poked the cheese down 'is throat with the 'andle of a knife, but a narrer squeak as ever any one 'ad in this world.

We was a-settin' werry quiet a-takin' of our refreshments, when I says, "Dear me, what a many waspses there is about," as I'm always afraid on

where beer's about, thro' their bein' such creaturs to get into the glass, and sting you unawares in drinkin'.

"Yes," says Mr. Ardin, "there must be a nest near I should say."

I says, "Oh, indeed," thro' not a-knowin' much about their ways. I says, "There's a lot on 'em there," and I pints with my parrysole to a 'ole in the bank as waspsés was a-flyin' in and out on; and jest then that dratted boy Sam come a-runnin' up, a-sayin' as he found a musheroon, and ketched 'is foot in somethink and come slap agin me, and made me tumble for'ard with my parrysole, as went into that 'ole in the bank, and out come the waspses by the 'undreds. Up I jumps and give a rush back'ards, and set down on all the bread and cheese, upsettin' the beer, and give old Ardin sich a back-'ander jest as he were a-drinkin', and throw'd 'im over agin 'is wife, as rolled over Matilda; and there was all the waspses attackin' on us, as Royston 'ad aggrawated wuss by 'ittin' at 'em with a umbreller.

I never did 'ear sich screams as they all set up, as brought the people from all round to see what was the matter.

I jumps about thro' feelin' I was stung, and 'ollers out, "Run for your lives!" and so we did all run, with the waspses arter us like fury, and them fools as come to look on a-shoutin' with their unfeelin' larfter.

It was ever so long afore we got away from them waspses, and then I says, "Wherever's Mrs. Barlow?" and if she wasn't left behind, and layin' on the bank.

I says, "She'll be devoured alive."

Says Mrs. Ardin, "And so we all might 'ave been, and all thro' you, you wicked, spiteful woman, as did it for the purpose."

I says, "Did what?"

"Why," she says, "stirred up them waspses."

I says, "It was your own cub of a boy as pushed agin me."

"Oh," she says, "Mrs. Brown, whatever you do don't tell no falsehoods, and lay it to that poor child."

Brown, he'd walked away to 'ave 'is pipe, as soon as he'd 'ad a mouthful of bread and cheese, and jest then come back as the good woman 'ad come out of the public-'ouse with the blue-bag, and dabbed all our stings with it, as was werry much stung about the face, specially Mrs. Ardin and her sister. So Brown he thought we'd been a-fightin' nat'rally.

As for Mrs. Barlow, she crawled up lookin' for all the world like a ghost with a 'eadache, and 'adn't been stung a bit thro' a-layin' quiet, as Brown said we shouldn't none of us 'ave been if we'd let the waspses alone.

There wasn't no pacifyin' Mrs. Ardin, and as to Royston he'd 'ave been downright abusive, only 'avin' no roof to 'is mouth he couldn't espress 'is low lived langwidge.

Brown 'ad the 'osses put to at once, and 'ome we went, a nice set of hobjecs, in the dead sulks. I got out at our place, and 'ad to help put Mrs. Barlow to bed, as got awful bad a-goin' 'ome; and if that party as 'ad been left at 'ome to take care of old Barlow 'adn't give the basket of prowisions as she see afore we was out of the street to a man as promised to run arter us with it, and in course lewanted with the lot.

I really was not sorry as we was goin' 'ome Monday, for tho' Mrs. Ardin and me shook 'ands as Christians should Sunday evenin', yet I never could feel like a friend to 'er no more, arter the things as she 'ad said to me before my face, and no doubt behind my back would call me everythink but a lady.

We was a-goin' by the train 'ome as leaves about two, and when I come to look at my box, I see it would never 'old together to the station, so I goes out early and buys a new one, as were a strong black one, as would 'old everythink, and I packed my smuggled tea and brandy at the bottom, a-'rappin' 'em up in my Chiny crape shawl.

We got up to town all werry well, and at London

Bridge Brown put me in a cab with the things, as he wanted to go and see arter 'is aunt alone, as was werry bad, thro' me not a-speakin' to none of 'er family, close agin St. George's Church.

I 'ad the carpet bag and a lot of parcels in the cab, and 'ad put my box on the top, and just arter we got out of the station, the cabman pulled up sudden, jumps off 'is box, and begins a-runnin' down a side street arter a man as was a-cuttin' away with my box on 'is 'ead, as he pitched down in the middle of the road, when he found as the cabby were on to 'im.

I never was more frightened, for the cab 'ad stopped in the middle of the street, and 'busses and carts was a-comin' every way, and jest as I see the feller throw the box down off 'is 'ead, somethink a-passin' knocked up agin my cab and set the 'oss off. I 'ollers "Woe" as loud as ever I could thro' the front winder, as only seemed to frighten 'im more, and on he rushed till he come agin a lamp-post, jest as I'd got the door open to jump out, as was consequentially tore off its 'inges in a instant.

Up come a crowd, as says, "Get out, mum, for the wheel's off."

"Come into the doctor's shop," says a old lady, "for I'm sure you must be dreadful shook."

I says, "I ain't 'urt."

"Get out," says another, and so I did, and they 'urries me into the doctor's.

I says, "I don't want no doctors, thank you," and turns back to the cab, as they'd been and cleaned everythink out on by the other door.

Up comes a perliceman. I says, "Where's my property took to?"

He says, "'Ow should I know?"

I says, "Some one's been and took it out of the cab, and I must 'ave it."

Well, the cabman he come up a-cussin' and a-swearin' like a powder maggyseen, and a boy as was a-carryin' my box, as was all mud, and the corner broke in.

Says the perliceman, "I've got your number, my man, as will 'ear more of this a-leavin' your 'oss like that."

He says, "A chap 'ad cut the lady's box off."

He says, "You couldn't 'ave 'ad it chained proper."

He says, "I've broke my chain this mornin'."

"Ah," says the perliceman, "that's where it is."

I says, "And might 'ave been my death, with all the rest of my things stole in broad daylight."

"Well," says the cabman, "the next box as is stole off my cab I'll let it go, as am a poor man with a wife in the 'ospital, but never mind."

I says, "Perliceman, whatever am I to do?"

He says, "Go 'ome, and if you likes to give me a description of the property as you've lost, I'll do my best to get it back for you."

I says, "There's a carpet bag and three paper parcels, with a large basket; but I can't remember a 'undredth part of the things as was in 'em; but," I says, "let me get out of this crowd whatever you do." So he got me another cab, and I give 'im my address, and 'ome I went, as Brown 'ad got there fust and couldn't think whatever 'ad become on me, and nearly frightened poor Mrs. Challin to death to see 'im walk in all alone in a mournin' 'at-band, nat'rally thinkin' as I'd been took sudden, as he'd put on for 'is aunt as 'ad died three nights afore quite unprepared for thro' them all a-thinkin' 'er better, as we did ought to 'ave got the letter Sunday mornin'—not as I believe they ever wrote, tho' I don't think as that Mrs. Barlow would forward it not to save my life thro' me 'avin' words with 'er at settlin', for I never did see sich a bill as she brought me in for insetterrers, and to say as we'd used 'arf-a-crown's worth of 'er castors, and a shillin' for blackin' as wore prunella shoes myself, and wanted to charge for black-lead as I wouldn't stand, and could 'ave swore I'd paid for them things from the baker's as they come in; and to think as she should 'ave the face to say I'd 'ad a dozen twists as 'ave but

a poor appetite for bread at all times! When I come to undo my box there was all my things steeped in brandy with the bottle broke, and I'm sure when I set down to my tea and a nice cooked chop as I enjoyed, I felt more myself, not as ever I 'ad any 'opes of 'earin' of my things any more, as was all my raffles and some eggs and fresh butter as I'd bought in the market that mornin'; but it might 'ave been wuss, for there's many as goes to the sea-side and meets their ends there thro' accidents as will 'appen in the best regulated families, as the sayin' is, tho' I must say it's my opinion as the sea don't suit my complaint, tho' I'm sure as I give it every chance, for we was there 'ard on five weeks, as it don't do for to go only for a week or so, as it requires time for the constitution to give in to it.

The perliceman he come once or twice over them things as there wasn't no tidin's on, and that cabman he come with sich a tale about 'is wife as were a-dyin', and leavin' 'im with three on 'is 'ands, that Brown give 'im a sov'rin, for you see we come into a tidy bit of property from the old lady as they buried in plumes at Nunhead, tho' I did not foller 'er myself, as will make us that well off as we needn't think of a pound or so.

Not as ever I wants to put on no hairs, nor set myself up for a swell, as would only prove a larfin' stock; and tho' we made it up with them other

relations as thought they'd got all the swag, as the sayin' is, yet I could see was all envy and 'atred in their 'arts when they come to tea, and went on a-sayin' 'ow wonderful well I'd wore thro' not 'avin' set eyes on me over twenty year, as is a good lump out of any one's life; not but what Mrs. Archbut was a fine woman, as is Brown's fust cousin by the mother's side, as were own sister to the old lady we'd jest berried, tho' too many ringlets for me and no family, and 'im in the buildin' line a-rollin' in money, and yet put out at Brown gettin' the property as were 'is rights, for, accordin' to 'is grandfather's will, it was to come to 'im when the last daughter was dead, as there 'ad been five on 'em and all fine women, as you could tell to look at Brown, as I don't mind a-sayin' is the 'an'somest man in London, let the next be wherever you may find 'im; and all I cares about is as we may 'ave 'ealth to enjoy it sensible, for tho' both the gals is married well and Joe a-doin' well over there, they won't be none the wuss for a little somethink comin' in by and by when we're dead and gone.

THE END.

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